This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

Dr. Edwin F. Gay

Here's hoping that you may find a moment's amusement in what I have made of the agony column of The Time

Edwin E. Slosson

Science Service

May 25, 1922

PLOTS AND PERSONALITIES

PLOTS AND PERSONALITIES

A NEW METHOD OF TESTING AND TRAINING THE CREATIVE IMAGINATION

BY

EDWIN E. SLOSSON, PH.D.

EDITOR OF SCIENCE SERVICE, WASHINGTON, FORMERLY LITERARY EDITOR OF "THE INDEPENDENT," NEW YORK, AND ASSOCIATE IN THE COLUMBIA SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM. AUTHOR OF "CREATIVE CHEMISTRY," "MAJOR PROPHETS OF TODAY," "GREAT AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES," "THE AMERICAN SPIRIT IN EDUCATION," ETC.

AND

JUNE E. DOWNEY, PH.D.

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING, AUTHOR OF "GRAPHOLOGY AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HANDWRITING," "THE HEAVENLY DIKÈS," "WILL-TEMPERAMENT AND ITS TESTING," ETC.

NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1922

L 1 T 960.17
4

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
GIFT OF
EDWIN FRANCIS GAY
Aug 30. 1932

Copyright, 1922, by
THE CENTURY CO.

Printed in U. S. A.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	How the Book Came to Be Written and What It Is About	3
II.	How to Use the Personals in Testing the Imagination	7
III.	The Interpretation of a Personal	26
IV.	Training the Literary Imagination	43
V.	Names and Clothes as Literary Accessories	59
VI.	Tricks of the Literary Imagination	74
VII.	What Kind of Mind the Novelist Needs	86
VIII.	Where the Writer Gets His Plots and Personalities	103
IX.	The Problem of the Plot	127
X.	Character-Creation	141
XI.	Plot-Making as a Safety-Valve	164
XII.	The Case-System of Literary Training	179
XIII.	Putting a Foot-Rule on the Imagination	208
XIV.	Miscellaneous Personals	226
XV.	Personals in Continuities	232

PLOTS AND PERSONALITIES

PLOTS AND PERSONALITIES

CHAPTER I

HOW THE BOOK CAME TO BE WRITTEN AND WHAT IT IS ABOUT

For seventeen years I was hired to read the London "Times" every day. The "Times" presents an unpromising exterior. The front page, instead of the shrieking head-lines of an American paper, designed to give the impression that this is the first day of the Apocalypse, is one gray mass of minor advertisements. But running down the middle of the page is a column of more general interest although it is headed "Personal." I have often found myself fascinated by these Personal advertisements when I should have been digging out facts about foreign affairs in the pages beyond.

Here was a part of the paper where the authors paid for permission to print instead of being paid to write. They wrote what they pleased, not what the editor wanted them to write. They were intensely earnest for the most part, often in dire distress. This section of the paper is with good reason called the "agony column," for here is real tragedy intermingled with comedy and commercialism. These advertisements are human docu-

ments of the first order, all put in tabloid form as is now the fashion. Why wade through pages of sentimental slush when here you can get the essence of a plot in four lines with the personalities sufficiently outlined so that any one with an imagination can develop the situation to suit himself? When a lady asked Disraeli to recommend her a good novel he replied: "Madam, whenever I want to read a good novel nowadays I have to write one." I found these germ stories more interesting than the diluted fiction of the magazines. When an author has to pay by the word instead of being paid by the word he takes more pains to make every word count. With a few Personals from the "Times" in my pocket I was secure from boredom on the subway and need not waste my eyesight and my money on magazines.

Next I tried them out on my friends. But the reaction I got was curious. Some took to the idea at sight, and having much more vivid imaginations than I, evolved most exciting situations and fascinating characters. Others found the Personals silly or worse and obviously thought the same of me for my interest in them. Then too the same name and message would be interpreted in the most varied ways by different people and I discovered that I could find out a great deal about the disposition and habit of mind of a person, even of a stranger, by what he or she made out of one of these anonymous fragments of feeling. It was great fun to pass a Personal around a company and ask them all to write down or to tell at once what they saw in it. Sometimes a latent talent for story-telling would be revealed, much to the delight of the person and the rest of us.

With the Personals pasted on cards one could make a novel and interesting game. I soon got more delight out of seeing what my friends would do with them than in what I could make of them myself. Professor Walter B. Pitkin of the Columbia School of Journalism found these Personals so useful as exercises in plot development that he put two pages of them in his course on "How to Write Stories," published by the Independent Corporation.

It seemed then that I had hit upon a new form of psycho-analysis comparable to dream interpretation, reverie, association-time, and the like. Here also was a test of the creative imagination which might do for this faculty what the new intelligence tests developed out of the Binet-Simon method did for determining alertness, accuracy, memory, judgment, etc. Possibly, it appeared to me, the scheme might be used not merely for testing the native power of imagination but also for developing and training it. It might serve as a form of vocational guidance and nip in the bud the aspirations of the young people who wanted to write fiction but lacked the fundamental qualification for it; that is, the ability to seize upon a hint of a plot and expand it into a thrilling and convincing novel. If these thousands of ambitious but incapable writers could be headed in some other direction the lot of the literary editor would be alleviated.

The best person that I knew of to try out the possibilities of such a plan was Dr. June Downey of the University of Wyoming, who had for years been making a study of the psychology of esthetics, especially of literary composition. I sent her a set of clippings from

the "Times" and she used them in her classes at the University of Chicago as well as Wyoming with remarkable results. Some of these were published in the "Independent" of 1921 in an article entitled "Have You Any Imagination?" and this together with an article by me in the "Independent" of March 6, 1920, on "A Game of Personalities" aroused such an interest not only among teachers of composition and psychology but also among literary aspirants and other persons who for various reasons found the idea stimulating that it seemed worth while to get out a book that would contain a wide selection of the Personals and other suggestive clippings with directions how to use them for testing and developing the creative imagination.

To this book Professor Downey has contributed some chapters giving in untechnical language the results of her researches on plot-making and character-construction and I some chapters on the fictional faculty and its use based upon my long experience as literary editor. In this partnership volume we have not attempted to eliminate all divergence of view or even an occasional contradiction, but that need not worry the reader any more than it does us for we have initialed our own sections. The object of the book is not to impose our ideas upon the reader but to stimulate him to germinate ideas of his own. For that reason we have put at the end a lot of "Times" Personals as well as head-lines from American newspapers. If the reader gets as much fun out of them as we have we shall be well paid for our trouble in preparing the book.

E. E. S.

CHAPTER II

HOW TO USE THE PERSONALS IN TESTING THE IMAGINATION

Measuring what the college-boy describes as "the void above the eyes" has become a fashionable pastime. The use of Binet puzzles, Thorndike examinations, and information-tests has multiplied since the military psychologists used them "to sort out major-generals from mere privates." Where the thing will end no one knows. I have heard of a family where discussions between husband and wife are terminated by her meek conclusion, "Your I. Q. [short for intelligence quotient] is higher than mine, so of course you 're right—always!" —a remark which, oddly enough, so exasperates the intelligent gentleman that he sometimes reverses himself.

But among intelligence-tests, tests of the imagination have been conspicuously absent. This book is to break territory in the latter field. Since the imagination is intelligence at play, one may approach the task in holiday spirit. Not to waste a moment of your vacationing —from more serious pursuits—I am going to start you off at once.

TEST 1. Below you will find a message sent via the personal column of the London "Times" by Sweetie to Jasper. You will be given five minutes in which

to write a characterization and description of Jasper and Sweetie.

JASPER.—Tick-tock, Tick-tock.—Sweetie.

Time 's up. Put aside what you have written and try another.

TEST 2. This also is an item from the personal column of the London "Times." It is addressed to Feathers by Skeine. Please work out a short-story plot from the message. Time-limit, ten minutes.

FEATHERS.—One on the left.—Skeine.

Time 's up. Pencils down! Let us now proceed to your dissection of yourself, dear reader. And we beg of you to keep your temper even though you don't agree with our diagnosis, for remember there are more things in heaven and earth than story-writers, and that if you can't write a novel you may be living one, which on the whole is much nicer.

Please classify your imagination under one of the following heads after you feel from study of the samples presented and the comments that you understand the distinctions. The divisions are as follows:

(1) The Inert Imagination.
(2) The Stereotyped Imagination.
(3) The Melodramatic Imagination.
(4) The Generalizing Imagination.
(5) The Particularizing Imagination.
    (a) Reminiscential.

(b) Creative.
(c) Dramatic.
(6) The Ingenious or Inventive Imagination.

The question of fertility and range of imagination we will discuss later.

1. Of the inert imagination, the most hopeless variety is that of the individual whose narrow sympathies preclude the possibility of an insight into characters or situations outside the range of his own experiences. Invention stumbles along, continually hampered by the narrow skirts of custom and etiquette.

Read the following production as an example of what I mean:

Newspaper personals are usually disguised statements understood only by the parties concerned. It would be impossible for me to form any idea of the above as I have never had any interest in such ads. Always had a quiet notion that they were most disreputable, veiled messages, perhaps between thieves or other undesirables. There is apparently no necessity for code messages between ordinary persons.

Or this:

Any such items in newspapers always appeal to me as sentimental and foolishly so. I noticed that the message was signed "Sweetie" and addressed to a man, so immediately put it in this class. The very fact of using a newspaper column as a means of correspondence shows her lack of self-respect and restraint. I am not interested enough to have a visual image of her.

You will perceive we are getting characterizations, but not of Sweetie and Jasper.

Of course, inactive fantasy shows itself sometimes by its puzzled rather than unsympathetic attitude. It stares helplessly at such a message. "I can't think what it means!" Or, "No plot. 'One on the left' suggests buying a theater-ticket."

A very distinctive reaction is given by the literal-minded individual, those dear friends of ours who walk in comfortable house-slippers and continually stir our sense of humor in the cleverest sort of way without in the least meaning to.

I can not refrain from illustrating this reaction by quotation of what I received when I used the following personal:

> SIR WALTER RAWLEIGH.—On Sunday morning at eleven o'clock, I will be in exactly the same spot as you saw me last Easter Monday evening.—Queen Bess.

I asked for a characterization of Queen Bess and got it!

Queen Bess has dark hair and eyes. She is very sedate in her manner and always on time. When she makes a promise she keeps it. If she were n't a queen I think she would be a good housekeeper, clean and neat, everything just so.

And take this one of Valerie who writes to Wal:

> WAL.—In this case two and three do not make five.—Valerie.

Valerie is a person rather inclined to say and do funny things, sometimes taking them very seriously. He is educated, thinks of the hypothesis of numbers, and says two and three do not make five. He is hasty in making decisions.

Another form of the unimaginative reaction gives us words, words, words!

Jasper is a working-boy who is in love with a certain working-girl and has been corresponding with her. I should say he is of average intelligence but at present concerned in a somewhat affected love-affair. Probably he has not been or probably he has been at college. When a character is in love it is difficult to tell just how much he does know. Jasper is a young man of the city and possesses the knowledge which the city man necessarily must have of amorous affairs. The rest developed by the thought which arose from the knowledge of certain observations of the ways of the world.

If now you belong to the household of the unimaginative either because of crippled sympathies, baffled wits, honest literal-mindedness, or utter inanity, the probability is you 're wasting your time in literary pursuits.

2. Let us turn next to the stereotyped conventionalized imagination which always hits upon the bromidic interpretation, just that which will occur to ninety-nine out of one hundred. As our psychological friends say, the coefficient of commonplaceness will run high and normality is guaranteed. And obviously there are advantages in such reactions, for the ninety and nine will understand you without effort and you will find their motives easy to follow. If you write stories there will

be nothing cryptic about them, nothing fantastic or strange that would deny them entrance into "Popular Tales."

Confess now, when you read the Jasper-Sweetie item, didn't you figure it out something like this: Sweetie is a pretty, fluffy, doll-like, cream-puff creature with golden hair, blue eyes, and too much saccharinity. Very likely you dressed her in sky-pink, gave her a large hat and a parasol, and possibly a stick of gum. You thought her sufficiently silly. But you rather liked Jasper. You pictured him as gentle, slow, steadfast, with brown eyes, and much imposed upon by the frivolous and very young lady calling herself Sweetie.

"Tick-tock" is some sort of love-message of course. "Time flies," or "I 'm counting the moments until you return," or "Really, dear Jasper, you are very slow," or "Let us meet under the big clock."

I have read so many interpretations of this message thus or similarly phrased that I am quite convinced that Jasper and Sweetie are a sentimental couple and that Sweetie takes too much initiative for a well-bred young lady. I am almost convinced by the repeated suggestion that she is a "perfect blond." And of course I have never questioned the assumption that Jasper was a man and Sweetie a woman.

3. But let us now go a step further and inspect the hackneyed imagination in gala dress. Behold the melodramatic, the yellow-journal imagination! Let us see what we can get out of Valerie's message to Wal, "In this case two and three do not make five."

Valerie, of French descent, a face clear-cut as a cameo and of the same delicate tints, framed with masses of burnished brown ringlets! She dresses, usually, in lavender with white near her pure Grecian profile. She is so tiny and delicate that no one would suspect her of great strength of character but think her a plaything to be loved and petted until one gazed into her eyes, lustrous deep pools of violet. She looked out on life with eyes that saw and understood.

Wal, her second cousin, dark, quick-tempered, impetuous, trying to sweep the world off its feet by his painting! He lives in the gay capital of France among the artistic set of upper Bohemia. His devil-may-care air elects him leader of a set that makes even the blasé gasp and take notice. Consequently his art suffers.

Coming home for a brief visit he chanced to see the lovely Valerie and fell desperately in love. She did not return his advances and he wrote her a poetic letter in which he says destiny came out in mathematical terms, since she had beauty and wealth and he had love and hope and genius. The sum was five. But alas! Valerie answers, "In this case two and three do not make five."

The encouraging thing about the sensational imagination is that though pruning is suggested, there is really something there to prune. Let us cite two more examples from a young romanticist to whom facts (including those of orthography!) are stranger than fiction. Let us give her an exchange of messages between Sybil and Leonard, thus:

> SYBIL.—Fantastic dreems disturb my rest; my mind is tortured by visions of gaunt and grisly specters; you alone possess the philter that will charm away these wraiths.—Leonard.

LEONARD.—It is strange that you should be tortured so; nevertheless, even if I can charm away the ogres, I do not know that you deserve it.—Sybil.

THE MAN—Tall, slender, deep-blue eyes; high forehead, from which is combed back waivy light brown hair. Leonard is yet young; and has not learned the ways of the many people in this world. He still goes to school, and it is at a dance that he has met the charming butterfly Sybil.

Naturally like many young people he thinks all she has told him is true; he has willed himself to fall madly in love with the fair damsel. He is extremely dramatic, high-minded, and in future years will be a benefit to society. But as yet his education is not set, and he rather wishes to show that he can be above the average; he is well read and intelligent but has not learned the ways of girls.

THE GIRL—Sybil; dressed in a pale pink evening-gown, her slender figure is very attractive; her soft rosey cheeks are surrounded by beautiful fluffy well-curled-and-puffed blonde hair; her baby-blue eyes are bright and sparkling, giving her a much brighter look than she really deserves.

Her baby-way, merry ringing laugh, constant flattering, ever changing way of talking makes her very sirenish. It is not Sybil's intention to be a faithful sweetheart to one particular man; she enjoys herself with all; and blames herself not when some poor unwise fellow like Leonard takes seriously her thoughtless words. She, like the rest of the girls of to-day, is very modern.

4. The Generalizing Imagination. The inclination to deal in thought with the general, the type, instead of the particular or the individual, is a mental trait which has had momentous consequences in the development of

intelligence, since it has resulted in capacity to handle classes rather than specific instances, to think conceptually instead of always in terms of individuals. In science, in philosophy, in business, it has enabled us to label things and then react quickly as suggested by the label. This is a case of scarlet fever, hence an occasion for establishing quarantine, writing out a certain prescription, giving disagreeable orders without being sidetracked by one's sympathies for the pretty girl whose complexion is under suspicion.

All X is Y, all Y is Z, all X is Z, chants the logician, and of course he is right. All doctors are men, all men are fallible, all doctors are fallible, only we dislike putting Dr. Tom, Dick, and Henry together so undiscriminatingly.

The most persistently generalizing types among men are the philosopher and the mathematician. It is impossible to individualize a mathematical formula, so long as it stays in a text-book, minutely enough to tell the color of its hair or the length of its mustache. But when it has succeeded in escaping from the monograph we know exactly what Mr. $A^2 + B^2$ looks like!

The generalizing type of mind, however valuable in the workaday and scientific spheres, is not the most promising type for the maker of stories. Remember Flaubert's teaching of Maupassant. "Having impressed upon me the fact that there are not in the whole world two grains of sand, two insects, two hands, or two noses absolutely alike, he forced me to describe a being or an object in such a manner as to individualize it clearly, to distinguish it from all other objects of the same kind."

If you find yourself inclined to classify Sweetie as "just any shop-girl," Skeine as the "usual crook," Sybil as the "every-day flirt," take yourself in hand and train yourself, as Flaubert trained Maupassant, to see individuals, not types.

5. The Particularizing Imagination. This is the imagination that the successful writer of stories must have, that is, if he has the right kind! For one may particularize in the wrong way and be the reminiscential individual, all whose imaginations are, so to speak, mere memories. Thus:

My procedure in getting characters for Jasper and Sweetie was as follows: Whenever I hear names I instantly review my list of acquaintances and see them clearly if they have a similar name. Jasper I have described exactly as I saw him in reality; in like manner came the girl-image Sweetie. I saw her the moment I saw the name just as she appeared when I worked in the same place with her.

One may actually be so fettered by one's own past that he thinks it dishonest to make a good story better by changing the time, the place, or the girl. One should, of course, borrow from Life all that one can persuade Life to loan, but then one should put this capital out at interest. Never let your conscience interfere with literary profiteering.

The individualizing imagination seeks to create a character or incident which shall be one of its kind:

Jasper is standing by a table. He is dressed in a large black and white-checked suit. He has a high forehead,

not intellectually conditioned but due to the baldness which is encroaching upon cerebral territory. He has dancy brown eyes and a foolish large mouth. He does not stand steadily upon his feet and is holding something too daintily between his fat thumb and forefinger.

Or take this reaction to the item:

> THE AMALGAMATED AGONY ASSOCIATION will soon be wound up. Happy results expected shortly.—Terror.

Billie Blowbummell, thirty-four years old, impatient, intractable, and changeable, has learned that his divorce proceedings will soon give him his freedom. He is attempting to communicate with Mrs. Billie No. 2, via press. Cautious, as well as impetuous, he would like to be discreetly indiscreet. He is large, fat, slow with a slight limp in one leg, which hesitancy of action is carried to his mental indecision and lands him in predicaments in spite of his caution. He is proud owner of a peanut-stand, in his lucider intervals.

If, in addition to individualizing characters, you find that your characters appear with a background and that they are *doing* something, you may feel greatly encouraged.

6. The Inventive Imagination. One other trait besides that of the particularizing touch is essential to the literary imagination. There must be some measure of mental flexibility, some possibility of invention, of striking out new combinations.

Let us return to Jasper and Sweetie. Of two score individuals who characterized Jasper and Sweetie for me, only three departed from the conventional sex-

suggestion conveyed in the names and read something into the item other than a flirtation.

Possibly success in characterization is more a matter of the creative individualizing touch, success in plot, of ingenuity and invention. Let us therefore turn to the message sent by Skeine to Feathers and gage the originality of our returns. This message demands more invention to handle it at all and it is therefore not surprising to find that more reject it as unmeaning and declare themselves incapable of weaving a plot around it.

Yet even here we find much community of ideas. The most common interpretation is one of communication between accomplices in crime, the prevailing idea being that a robbery is incubating. "One on the left" designates the house or the box or the man who is to be victimized.

Next in favor is the theater story. Feathers now becomes the vampish chorus-girl, in the garb of a peacock or skirted with ostrich-plumes, and Skeine is communicating to her the one to be watched, either the domestic encumbrance in the box "on the left" or the fatuous millionaire to the left of the cold-blooded Dives.

Other interpretations include an auction story in which the object that is to be bid in is the "One on the left"; or the story of a man-milliner's attempt to sell to the fabulously rich lady the hat "on the left"; or a business story and the purchase of the oil-well on the left. A humorous story—rara avis—is suggested; an assault by Feathers on Skeine's enemy on the left. But Feathers' sense of direction is confused by his approach to the scene and he beats up the wrong man!

Again, since the girl walks on the left, this cryptic message refers to the girl in the case, who is in the wrong, but the man gets left, a suggestion which in turn needs interpretation.

Of course plausibility as well as originality needs to be graded in these reactions. Originality without plausibility lands us in the fantastic, just as plausibility without originality lands us in an amplification of the obvious.

As a side-light upon how your imagination functions, it is well worth your while determining where your characters and plots come from, by what working of association they are called out.

"Feathers," one of my collaborators writes, "a floating bit of material, consequently one not held down to regular work or by conventions."

"Skeine, a continuous thread, often tangled in unwinding, suggests deceit."

Experiment shows that there are individuals so sensitive to the tiny arabesque of curves and angles or phonetic values that make up a name, that they actually have suggestive power. Only—and here 's the rub in application—there is little agreement even among those keenly sensitive to the facial profile of a word. Preoccupation with word-physiognomy is evidenced in the report I am now quoting:

My process of reaction is as follows: The sound of the names suggests the pictures. Sweetie and Jasper are both light-headed, the long "e" sound of the former suggesting greater degree of near-imbecility than the short "a" of Jasper. The single syllable (nearly) of

the first name suggests a short figure; the delayed enunciation of the second a taller one (just as it takes longer to raise eyes to a tall figure). No. 1 is impetuous; No. 2 is conservative, even-tempered (name is almost spondaic) and has depth (production of "a" in throat and "p" by lips), therefore wide change—gives character a sort of second dimension.

One question can only be stated here, but it is worthy of thoroughgoing investigation. I refer to the distinction between spontaneous and deliberate invention and to the question whether the former is a mark of the creative imagination. With the evidence at hand it is, I think, very rash to conclude that the floating into consciousness of plots or the sudden introduction to lively characters is the only guarantee of an imagination worth working. Apparently some imaginations do most of their work below the threshold of consciousness and others do their drudgery in full daylight awareness, and the only thing that counts from the literary point of view is the results.

In any case there can be no question that plot-making and character-making grow by practice and that one can acquire the habit of having inspirations. It is as an aid in the acquisition of such a good habit that we are appending a number of Personals, with suggestions as to the various uses to put them to. You can do your mental gymnastics and conduct your self-examination at the same time.

(1) First of all, you should discover whether you more naturally go from characters to plot or from plot to characters. Do you start from the names and their sugges-

tion of personalities or from the message with its suggestion of incident? Plot-making and character-feeling draw their vitality from somewhat different roots, and knowing which tendency is the stronger in yourself you are better able to use your talent effectively.

(2) To test the fertility of your imagination it is well to determine how many plots you can get out of one and the same message, or how many Personals you can find plots for in a given time.

(3) By working over the messages as a group-exercise or pastime, it is possible to get a notion of one's commonplaceness or originality in invention. We have already suggested that nine out of ten hit upon the obvious interpretation. What do you do? Undoubtedly there are times when the obvious interpretation gives one the most interesting story of all. Never to catch the hint that is conveyed to the average reader might put in question one's rapport with human nature. Common-sense realism has a big place in literature and too fantastic invention might well land one in manifest absurdity.

(4) Ingenuity may be further stimulated by weaving a plot about several messages taken together. They may or may not be connected on the face of it.

Here are two that are:

FRED.—Any soap, any candles?—Sausage.

SAUSAGE.—No thanks, but a box of matches.—Fred.

Or this:

DEAR LITTLE FRIEND.—Does Omar XXXII state the position 21st March, 1920?—A.

OMAR XXXII.—I don't think it does somehow.—Pauline.

Of course you hasten to pull out your Omar and find that Verse XXXII reads:

There was the Door to which I found no Key,
There was the Veil through which I might not see;
Some little talk a while of Me and Thee
There was—and then no more of Thee and Me.

(5) To exercise the imagination in controlled invention one may give the message with a particular suggestion, "Get a tragedy out of this; a comedy out of that." Or "Let this Personal be the introduction or the climax of a short-story."

The giving of negative suggestion is another way of stimulating the imagination. Thus "This is *not* a detective-story"; "This is *not* a flirtatious message"; "Don't look for a code in the message."

The late Professor Royce of Harvard University once reported a most interesting experiment on the psychology of invention, in the course of which he used what he called the "stimulus of the unlike." He asked for a design as *unlike* the copy as possible. Invention proved to be definitely fertilized just by the attempt to be *different*. New schools in their effort to be different have sometimes produced extremely bizarre and fantastic

works of art which have nevertheless fertilized the conventional art of their epoch.

So our Personalities may be used with some such negative suggestion. Choose a very obvious item as "So it was only a wonderful dream after all," and ask for a story in which plot and characters shall depart as far as possible from the one suggested.

To show what reactions one of these Personals may arouse in a group I add one of the letters received in response to the first publication of the method:

San Francisco.

DEAR DR. DOWNEY:

I want to tell you how much I enjoyed your article in the "Independent" of May 20, 1921. Last evening I recalled some of the ads at the dinner-table and decided to try one of them on the group assembled.

I selected the most promising fellow (at least the one I thought would be most promising) and said, "Charles! I want to test your power of imagination. The following ad appeared in the personal column of a London paper: 'Jasper.—Tick-tock, tick-tock.—Sweetie.' Tell me about Jasper and Sweetie, and give me the story connected with the ad."

I had scarcely finished speaking when Charles began:

"Jasper is a man about thirty-five years of age. If he were younger, Sweetie would have called him 'Jaspie' or 'Jasp.' Sweetie is nineteen, rather adventurous and the daughter of a well-to-do man who strenuously objects to his daughter receiving attentions from any men. He in fact keeps her so closely guarded that she has great difficulty in leaving the house.

"The house in which the girl lives with her father is an old-fashioned rambling dwelling with a heavy paneled oak door and a large, rather dark hall with a

grandfather's clock in one end of it. Access to the father's study can be gained through a narrow passageway leading off the hall. An inlaid oak floor covers both the hall and passageway. In front of the grandfather's clock is a rug. The girl is in the habit of spending the long evenings curled up in a cozy nook of the hall, reading."

Sweetie met Jasper at some school-girl function, but I omit his explanation here. He went on:

"It was Sweetie's idea that at half-past seven each night Jasper should noiselessly slip through the front door into the hall, to meet her, and should her father approach Jasper was to jump into the grandfather's clock and there remain until called out by her gentle call, 'Tick-tock, tick-tock.' The plan worked admirably, and the lovers were always warned of the approach of the father by his heavy footfalls on the inlaid flooring of the passageway.

"One night the couple quarreled and Sweetie told Jasper that she never wished to see or speak to him again. Two long days tortured their way through life, and on the morning of the third day, while shopping, she called at the office of the newspaper and inserted the ad. Jasper saw it and at seven-thirty, etc., etc."

Some one else, a lady of about forty, spoke up after Charles had finished, and said: "That 's a very clever imagination you have, but I think there is no doubt as to the correct interpretation of the ad. 'Tick-tock, tick-tock,' certainly means two o'clock, and the people concerned were two very ordinary people who had agreed upon that plan of telling each other when they would meet. The place was always the same."

Two of the boarders agreed with this speaker, one

emphasizing the explanation by saying that it certainly was the logical solution of the "problem."

I want to thank you for having furnished a most enjoyable dinner. I intend to try it out on others later. How would you class Charles?

J. E. D.

CHAPTER III

THE INTERPRETATION OF A PERSONAL

There are two ways of working out the meaning of a "Times" Personal: (1) the impressionistic, (2) the analytical. The impressionistic mind may catch the hint from the names and wording and work out the idea according to his own fancy regardless of the probability of its correctness. The analytical mind will endeavor to deduce the actual facts from the clues contained in the item itself.

The impressionistic mind needs no prompting, so let us consider the method of analysis. The first point that arouses one's curiosity is why the advertisement was published at all. The minimum charge for an insertion in the Personal column of the "Times" is ten shillings. This is for two lines, and each additional line costs five shillings. This at the normal rate of exchange means nearly $2.50 at the least and perhaps $3.75 or more. Now a letter can be sent for a penny and a telegram for sixpence, and a conversation costs nothing. A London telephone is highly inconvenient but can be used in an emergency. So why advertise? Evidently because the ordinary channels of communication are closed. This opens various avenues of speculation. One possibility would be that the said party of the first part does not

know the address of the said party of the second part. That is obviously the case with the following:

TODDY.—If you are anywhere in this wide, wide world write immediately to same address you left.—Jamie.

D.W.T.—Toronto. No letter—Please write.—Dad.

A.A.—Come home at once; urgent.—Mother.

CYNTHIE, dearest, your absence is distressing us; write to us immediately, that we may know you are well.—Mother.

CYNTHIE.—You will be sorry by and by, and then it will be too late to remedy things; be honest with yourself now, and look facts squarely in the face.—Sidney.

JOE.—Communicate with me.—Fred.

REGENT'S PARK, Sunday last, white gloves and violets. Will tall, fair lady enter Regent's Park Sunday next, same hour, same gate, to meet worshiper of beauty? If impossible, kindly fix other day and hour, signing street where first met.—Tophat.

LADDIE.—Come home at once, you foolish boy; we don't want to spend an unhappy Xmas.—Pater and Mater.

If it is a message of affection we may surmise that the lover has been forbidden the house and the stern father, acting on the authority conferred by British law, intercepts his letter. Or it may be the lady returns his

letters unopened and he hopes to catch her eye involuntarily. Sometimes a lover who has left for parts unknown is appealed to by the girl he left behind him.

If it is necessary to advertise why choose the "Times"? It is the most expensive of English dailies and has not the widest circulation. On the other hand it is the best-known and highly esteemed and is to be found in every British club and in reading-rooms all over the world. Its selection as a medium of communication implies a certain class standing in the hierarchy of British society for the two parties coming into communication. Then, too, the Personal column in the front page of the "Times" is a unique and historic institution. It is without a rival though it has many imitators. A prominent New York paper some years ago started a Personal column of this sort but it was suppressed by the police because it was used for immoral purposes. The London "Times's" column is carefully guarded. This was especially the case during the war. The Germans took particular pride in keeping the London "Times" on display in the cafés and news-stands, when it could be procured, as a contrast to the British and American policy of suppressing German papers. Here was an obvious channel of communication with enemy countries by code, and many patriotic Britishers wrote to the editor or to the Government demanding the suppression of the Personals. These indignant protests must have been amusing to the British Intelligence Office which was using the column as a bait to German spies and ran down every unauthenticated person who offered an advertisement. On the other hand the "Times" was

extensively used by parents in communicating with their boys in the trenches and it often happened that a message published in the Personal column reached the soldier more quickly and surely than a letter or telegram.

In time of peace there is no objection to code advertisements, and if we want to find out what a particular Personal really means we must consider the possibility of its being a blind. The most romantic item may cover a commercial transaction. For instance:

> DAMOZEL.—Ever longing for news. Won't you write? Ever true: love; merry Xmas.—Baby.

may be a notification to a chain of apothecary-shops throughout the United Kingdom to raise the price of soap. Or this quotation from "Mother Goose":

> WAGGLES.—"The little dog laughed to see such sport."—Bernard.

may be the instructions of a broker to his agents to sell Marconi short. But such cryptograms need not bother us if we do not care to find out the truth but only to arrive at a plausible and interesting surmise.

Let us then consider the conditions under which this newspaper correspondence is conducted. Here are two people who want to communicate with each other—or at least one person who wants to communicate with another—and the ordinary channels of speech, post and telegraph are for some mysterious reason unusable. They must therefore send a private message through a public medium. It is as though they were imprisoned in second-story rooms on opposite sides of the street and

had to shout their secrets over the heads of the passers-by. The message then must be so worded that it will be intelligible only to one person out of the thousands who may see it. How shall it be addressed? Initials are often used but have the disadvantage that several other persons may have the same letters and so the advertiser gets what in the telephone exchange is called the "wrong number." Occasionally we find in the Personal column a frantic protest that the message of, say, W. S. B. to C. E. was answered by a wrong C. E. and needs to be contradicted. The use of Christian names is almost as ambiguous. For instance:

> JACK.—Please remember your promise last November. Very ill.—Rosy.

More than one Jack may have forgotten his promise of last November and neglected his Rosy. Let us hope that they are all conscience-stricken by this piteous appeal.

When a Silent Worshiper appealed to a Shy Lady for permission to approach, no less than three shy ladies asked for particulars, two of these advertisements appearing in the same issue of the "Times":

> SILENT WORSHIPER.—Was shy lady in members' friends' pavilion at Lord's on Monday and Tuesday?

> WHERE did Silent Worshiper meet Shy Lady last time?

> WILL Silent Worshiper give date of last meeting? Uncertain identity.—S. L.

It is evident from the following that there were more than one pair of Laughing Eyes directed at some Wight in Gray:

LAUGHING EYES.—Oh! how could you? Wight in Gray.

THE WIGHT IN GRAY thanks the several pairs of Laughing Eyes for their manifest interest in him, but regrets that his absence in the country for a few days prevents him from replying at once.

Apparently the Wight in Gray was so much tickled by the various bites at his hook that he tried it again with a new bait:

MISS BLUE MIST.—I, in my garret, all forlorn, think of my ladye fayre, and would wonder if she thinks of me, and wonder if she cares.—The Wight in Gray.

Doubtless this plea softened the hearts of various ladies in gauzy-blue garments toward their gray-clothed admirers.

Messages addressed to Sweetheart, Dearest, or their French equivalent can hardly be classed as "Personal" since they may be accepted by many others than the one to whom they were intended. Such ambiguous addresses lead to complications like the following:

O SWEETHEART mine. Loving kisses. Ever thine.

EVER GRATEFULLY.—Was the message to SWEETHEART on the 10th from you, cheri? I did not reply before because I cannot be sure. But should it have been, then I understand, for that explains; and I do believe and will willingly forgive you everything. Only you must learn never to distrust me any more; it hurts us both, and you know you have always found that you were wrong. Promise me; and don't be afraid of anything.—Yours.

CHERI.—If you will only own the truth, dear, then believe me everything will come out right. There is nothing to fear, for I do understand, though it may not seem so. If you doubt me again because of what has happened remember it alters nothing of what I have already told you. Circumstance drove me, but I have never really doubted you. Will you not end this misunderstanding without waiting any more? The days we never can recall are slipping so fast.—Cherie.

CHERI.—I wonder if my Mr. Man. What initials? If correct, will write.—Red Rose.

SILENCE not mine entirely, have written, which you ignored. Shall not write again. If you care, write Box H. 805, The Times, E. C. 4.—Cheri.

DEAREST.—How can I write to you, knowing neither your name nor address?—Cheri.

Often the communication must be kept secret, not only from the public but from the family or associates of the person addressed, and in such cases the use of real names, initials, or known nicknames is impossible. But here advantage may be taken of the curious fact that in cases of intimacy and affection secret nicknames are likely to come into use. Brothers and sisters, school

chums, lovers and married couples, parent and child, any two persons who are much together and love one another may acquire pet names that are somehow regarded as too sacred to be revealed to the outside world. In folk-lore such secret names play a prominent part, and in certain savage tribes young men who have sworn brotherhood adopt private names that they alone know.

Sometimes two friends gradually develop what is virtually a code language of their own out of their common experiences and constant intercommunication of thought. But long association is not necessary to acquire nicknames or a set of catchwords that only the two know. They may have merely met and exchanged badinage for half an hour and yet have felt that sudden sense of intimacy and mutual understanding which in extreme cases is called "love at first sight." If then they are separated they might easily communicate through the public press without having arranged a formal code.

A large proportion of the private names disclosed in these Personals are diminutives or pet names, the sort that one would apply to a child. This is based on the psychological law that strong emotion is likely to find expression in infantile forms of speech. A violent shock or emotional crisis may drive one momentarily into infantile babbling. Lovers are likely to resort to "baby-talk" in conversation or correspondence. This is not a sign of weak-mindedness as the unsympathetic eavesdropper may infer. Dean Swift's love-letters are full of baby-talk and he was not weak-minded. A man is inclined to take a paternal attitude toward his sweetheart and she finds delight in "mothering" her "big

boy." A fascinating lady of my acquaintance, who has been much bothered by being made love to by all sorts and conditions of men, once explained to me how she knew when they were becoming serious: "I don't mind what they say until they begin to call me 'little woman'; then I put a stop to it."

A very few samples will suffice, for somehow such baby-talk does not sound so charming to the outsider as to the participants:

JANE.—Oi do loike oo.

LINDA.—Now haughty, then coy, what's a poor fellow to do-o-o?—Jack-in-the-Green.

MAUD.—Your big baby asks.—H.

Mere analysis of the names may give us a clue or set our imagination going. But even pet names are not so original and exclusive as their inventors suppose:

MOUSIE.—Too bad of you; shall try the Hat-trick.—Dom.

More than one dominant male has called his sweetheart "Mousie."

SPHINX, your riddle is nearing solution. —M. L. K.

Any woman is a sphinx to the opposite sex.

ONYX.—Thanks sweet note. It was like a dream and I never felt happier.

ONYX.—Very many thanks, dear; need your love and confidence more than ever. Don't write till I let you know; all my love always.

YOU.—Received all your letters. You fix your date and I will do utmost arrange. Let me know soon. Delighted.—Dear.

YOU.—With you always. Suspense fearful. Was message Onyx yours?—M.

YOU.—Delighted. Will meet you, all being well, at station. Thanks two letters.—Dear.

ONYX.—You are a dear to send such sweet notes. I shall never change because you are wonderful and make me very happy. I wonder if my day will really come.—A. M. L.

Here evidently the wires crossed owing to the fact that "onyx" is not a rare stone with either sex and many a "dear" has found no name so adequate for the loved one as "you." There was once a popular song with the refrain: "You ask me why I love you? Because you 're you," which is about as near as anybody could come to analyzing this intangible attraction.

Books afford a convenient code of communication. Literature holds a mirror up to life, and later lovers than *Paolo* and *Francesca* have found themselves re-

flected in a book. From the following it is evident that some folks still read Dickens, Du Maurier, Omar Khayyam, and Miss Alcott, as well as Shelley and Shakspere:

LITTLE WOMEN.—Meet me Holborn Empire any afternoon, 2:15, to see Twins.—Meg and John.

ORLANDO.—Yes.—Miranda.

DICK.—Hail to thee, blythe spirit, bird thou never wert!—Chuckie.

SHORT.—Need not be in vain if you do that which is right.—Codlin.

LITTLE BILLEE.—You tease me, to try me, but I shall be found watching and waiting.—Trilby.

TRILBY.—A noble resolve; may you have strength to carry it out.—Little Billee.

TRILBY.—Somehow or other, the wheels won't go round.—Little Billee.

SEPTEMBER.—Yes, dear; I think Omar 37 quite right.—April.

CHESHIRE.—Why will you fly from me and misunderstand my letter? Read Omar LXXIII. For I have loved you from April to September.

T.—DEAR: Read O. 73. It CAN be done! Our "sorry scheme" is but a tangle of misunderstandings. I can explain everything that 's puzzled you, if you 'll give me a real chance. I 'm to blame for much; but truly I 've never meant to let you down. I think the beginning of all this was the omission of the accent from "passé" and all my consequent stupid misreading. Forgive, dear, will you?

But in using the "Rubaiyat" as a code-book it is necessary to see that the two have the same edition. The stanza referred to is XCIX in my Vedder-Fitzgerald. Also when you write in French look out for your accents, otherwise you may be endowed with an unwarranted "past."

Some of these Personals are decidedly personal and reveal the emotions and character of the advertiser with great clarity:

LET IT BE KNOWN TO THE LADIES (?) with ugly lap-dog in Haymarket, 11:20 Dec. 1st, that the mere man who, through being entangled in Marcus's lead, causing the "little dear" pain, got home safely, with the aid of some pins, kindly given him by some of their better bred fellow creatures.

THE art of "scrounging" apparently still exists, but the Cinema Commissionaire who took the Army officer's hat in mistake for his own at the Junior Turf Club last week will save the advertiser a lot of embarrassment if he will write to Box X, 372, The Times, E. C. 4.

V.D.—You may consider it very smart to interfere in other people's affairs, but one of these times somebody's big brother will appear on the scene, and then look out for squalls.—F.

L.—I know now why I was made to look foolish; that insane vanity would have driven you to do such a despicable thing, I should never have believed had I not witnessed it myself. They say once bitten twice shy, and I shall take my lesson to heart.—Good-by.—Pl.

Here is a paragraph with punch to it:

TO the smirking, top-hatted rogue who departed with my hard-earned winnings at Epsom on Friday. I have a good memory for a face and usually get my penny back on the punching machine.

In the following case even a reader with a very dull imagination will have no difficulty in getting a mental picture of the advertiser:

WHY not a "FATTY"—(Englishman)? I am over 20 stone. Would any one like to film me? If so, write to Box T, 292, The Times.

The Personal puzzles are made more confusing and therefore more fascinating by the fact that they are fragmentary. Sometimes we have only one side of the correspondence, which is like overhearing a Personal at the telephone. One of the two may be able to write, but cannot receive letters. Sometimes an outsider cuts in on the correspondence, either by mistake or mischief. For instance:

OLIVER.—Some knave spoke in thy name. —Praise-the-Lord.

The fundamental requisite of a story-teller is the habit of speculation about people. The people he sees

on the street-cars—where one sees all sorts of people—who are they? What are they thinking about? What are they doing? What would they do under other conceivable but curious circumstances? What if the casual and incongruous couple sitting side by side on the opposite seat were thrown together on a desert island, or joined together in the bonds of matrimony? A fragment of a conversation overheard by chance haunts him till he thinks up a situation naturally involving it, just as an unresolved chord annoys the musical mind. As the elevated train speeds by a window he catches a stage-setting that makes him wonder what the rest of the drama may be. The "Times" Personals are like such window snapshots, tantalizing glimpses of real life, set up in secret code that adds to the fascination. There is a hundred-dollar short-story, salable to some one of our fiction magazines, in any of these two-line advertisements if one has the knack of unraveling its mystery:

> FRIDAY.—So it was only a wonderful dream after all. Good-by, dear.—B.

What was the dream of Man Friday—or is it Woman Friday?

> G.W.—Foiled again; we will yet make the welkin ring with a joyous madrigal.—Sumatra.

How was George Washington—if that is his name—foiled, and why should the Sumatran—I wonder what his color is—want to make the welkin ring with a madrigal?

ARKANSAW.—Poor Bear. Don't understand, but we're one always—now and evermore.—A. L.

What happened to the Arkansaw Traveler and what is it that A. L. does not understand?

PLINY.—Your quips and jests may seem harmless enough to you, but recollect there are some to whom they are as a poisoned dart.

Why should that reputable Latin author be accused of malicious jesting?

IT seems to me 'tis only noble to be good. —Laughing Eyes.

NITA.—Full many a flower is born to blush unseen, and waste its sweetness on the desert air.—Mooltan.

Laughing Eyes and Mooltan appear to be familiar with Bartlett's "Quotations," but why do they advertise the fact?

IF lady lunching, Midland, Birmingham, 23rd, afterwards 2:55 P. M., Paddington, in Black Musquash, Opossum collar, single pearl third finger right hand, mentioned names Adkins and Wilson, communicate Box V. 608, The Times, will receive something her advantage.

V. 608 must have stared hard at the lunching lady to describe her furs so accurately.

TULIP.—Don't get cold feet!—Nicholas.

I should say a tulip was the last thing in the world to get cold feet.

DOUBLE, S. Kensington, morning of 6th, much regrets his honesty.—Box V. 958, The Times.

Apparently Mr. S. S. Kensington has found that honesty is not the best policy.

WOULD any one POSSESSING SKELETON, and having no use for same, kindly LEND it to TWO STUDENTS who are unable to buy?

Every one carries a concealed skeleton, not counting what he may have in his closet, but he is not likely to lend it to the two poor students so long as he lives.

'MELIA.—Play a little music in the band.—Dryad.

I Never heard such musical a discord, Such sweet thunder.—Echo.

But Echo does not echo his "Midsummer Night's Dream" as accurately as an echo should.

GENUINE OFFER BRONTOSAURUS.—Four ex-infantry officers will UNDERTAKE an EXPEDITION in SEARCH of the ABOVE REPTILE provided expenses are paid by wealthy interested person.—W. G., The Times.

This was published when the papers were discussing the possibility of living specimens of prehistoric saurians being found in Africa.

ELSIE.—Simply must resume Westermarck. Not afraid of Marie or anybody like her. And Clara has a lily for you.—Edith.

The story of this Personal may be found in "Those About Trench," by Edwin Herbert Lewis. After you have worked out your own version, compare it with that of the novel.

At the end of the book will be found other Personals for practice.

E. E. S.

CHAPTER IV

TRAINING THE LITERARY IMAGINATION

Some one once wrote a charming short-story of a professional writer whose days and nights were haunted by a panicky fear of his running some day out of story plots and starving in a garret. He became a miserly author and doled out his plots with a sparing hand, unaware that the miracle of the loaves and the fishes was especially addressed to those who do the work of the spirit and that he need only concern himself with gathering up the fragments after each editorial dispensation.

In literary invention the only way to acquire a capital is to put your talent out at interest. One must use the little he possesses if he would get more. In the pages that follow we purpose to give numerous gymnastic exercises for the imagination. My present purpose is to give some general advice and to point a few morals, as follows:

Acquire the proper mental sets, even at the cost of much practice.

Get rid of your inhibitions, even though this require a number of visits to a modern mental surgeon or your best friend.

Cultivate your emotions without undue fear of a broken heart or of lacerated vanity.

Develop a self-conscious technic. Find out what starts your mind working; learn where the electric button is located that turns on your mental illumination or explodes your sky-rockets. Capitalize your limitations.

Experiment with social stimulation, not in the old fashion of boring any acquaintance by reading him your last effusion, but by writing something with him and defending with temper your adjective against his verb, your heroine against his hero.

Let us amplify our good advice.

Acquire the plot-making set of mind. Such a patterning of consciousness may be very deliberately developed by proper exercise if one starts with a modicum of capacity. One may learn to expand the conversation overheard on the street-car into a whole novel; one may acquire skill in persuading the story-book girl seen on the subway into returning to her home between cloth covers by issuing the invitation again and again. One may indeed acquire the habit of having inspirations as one cultivates a taste for olives by a little initial heroism. In a number of cases I have had a chance to watch the plot-making set develop in students, in spite of the unfavorable conditions attendant upon a routine college course and limitations in the way of time. Usually within two years one can begin to notice considerable increase in facility and fertility in plot-construction. What might be accomplished by further extension of time I do not know, since college authorities with their well-known wrong-headedness reverse the logical pro-

cedure and invite the poor instead of the good student to repeat the course!

I have considerable faith in sheer exercise developing plot-invention but much less confidence in forcing character-creation by deliberate effort. The latter is rooted so deeply in the instinctive life that its development cannot be directed rationally. At most, one can counsel a rich experience, the getting into contact with the greatest possible varieties of human personality. The Game of Personalities is therefore strongly recommended. The fact that its material is taken from life makes pondering the Personals and similar documents a real exercise in human motives.

Inhibit Inhibitions. There is a possibility of the scientist carrying on some really valuable investigation for the literary man and determining experimentally what mental sets have an inhibitory effect one upon the other. If the attitude of suspended judgment and infinite caution inhibits confidence in one's inspirations let us recognize the dangers of scientific training for the poet. If psychologizing inhibits dramatizing, let us psychologize with discretion. If, on the other hand, inhibition of any particular mental set be due to ignorance of possibilities in the way of manipulating different sets of mind, let us discover the proper methods of manipulation. If necessary we may emulate William Sharp and fuse our critical tendencies into one personality and our poetical into a Fiona MacLeod, or at least adopt a stimulating pen-name.

One of the strongest forces inhibiting creative work is self-distrust. Few realize that just being one's self is

the likeliest way of achieving originality. Most of us lack nerve enough to be ourselves. We find it safer to live within inverted commas. How very great our unused possibilities are we may never realize until the brakes are thrown off by some strange accident of the spiritual life or by the momentary intoxication of wine or hypnotism or love. If we could discover a scientific and harmless method by which we could let ourselves go at will many of us might change from conventional every-day people into charming Patience Worths. If the ouija-board be the best method of manipulating such transformation, by all means let us adopt it as a training instrument for the literary imagination!

James, apropos of his famous suspicions as to the range of human energies, has indicated in his delightful fashion the checking of activity by various forms of inhibition.

Social conventions prevent us from telling the truth after the fashion of the heroes and heroines of Bernard Shaw. Our scientific respectability keeps us from exercising the mystical portions of our nature freely.

Women especially suffer from the inhibitions imposed by social beliefs. The smile of polite incredulity that greets any claim of a woman's understanding masculine psychology accounts possibly for the failure of many women novelists in the creation of convincing men characters. They just haven't dared trust their own reading of their own dual nature. With men it has worked differently. The authorities on feminine

psychology are all, or nearly all, men; and a great many women understand themselves only because they have been explained to themselves by their wise brothers, and lovers, and physicians.

James suggests that we map out human possibilities, mental and physical, in every direction and then work out from biographical material the methods by which every type of man may be energized. The suggestion is worth following. Many of the minor eccentricities of genius appear to be the outcome of accidental discoveries of ways of increasing brain activity. Rousseau and Shelley were given to exposing the bared head to the hottest of midday suns; and Whitman, says Dexter in "Weather Influences," wrote much of his "Leaves of Grass," "while prone upon the white sands of a Long Island beach, with such a sun as only seems to blaze there."

The habit of writing in a reclining position is not uncommon. Such a position appears to have been favored by Milton, Descartes, Leibnitz, Stevenson, Mark Twain, and others equally famous. Even the masculine propensity for elevating the feet above the head is shown to have an excellent reason back of it; the blood is kept where it is most needed.

Many thinkers prefer a leisurely stroll to a Morris-chair, even though at times one must dismiss a companion in order to woo the muse, as Emerson did so politely; or drop one's ear-flaps as a gentle hint after Spencer's fashion. Walking one's thoughts not asleep but awake always calls to my mind Plato's description of Protagoras and his train of listeners.

Nothing delighted me more than the precision of their movements; they never got into his way at all; but when he and those who were with him turned back, then the band of listeners divided into two parts on either side: he was always in front, and they wheeled round and took their places behind him in perfect order.

Cultivate your emotions. Plato, Shakspere, Everyman are alike aware that the lover is kin not to the madman only but to the poet as well. He who sings no songs when under the influence of the passion of love will assuredly sing none at calmer moments. Certain geniuses appear to be as dependent upon love as stimulant to their creative activities as others are dependent upon drugs.

Fear too may stimulate invention, as all of us can testify who have fled on a dark, lonely road from a fantastical monster that loped toward us from the shadows. The imaginative horrors of the future that worry can create are vividly realized by those of us who in spite of good advice from our neighbors persist in crossing bridges before we come to them. What we find on the other side does credit to our inventive capacity if not to our judgment.

Anger may force our activities to the blossoming point. Rivalry—a mild form of the fighting instinct—is credited with much of the creative activity in business life. Art production is also an assertion of selfhood, an attempt to justify our having a place in the sun. Forced from one field of endeavor by native limitations we seek an outlet elsewhere. The boy whose physical weakness drives him from the foot-ball field may strive for mas-

tery in the debate. The girl whose coquetry meets with a chilling response may substitute for it a flirtation on paper with an imaginary character. All this will be handled from another angle in the discussion of compensatory make-believe.

The problem at present is how to develop emotional conflicts sufficient to furnish a driving force for creative work. A well-worn story-plot features the music-master who recommends a broken heart as a graduate course for the great prima donna. While recognizing the music-master's wisdom, I hesitate giving his advice to writers. There exists such a horde of the latter that the world might be drowned in tears as was Alice's famous Wonderland. Moreover the details the method requires escape my imagination. Possibly the critic finds his function here.

Locate your mind's electric button. Many workers find their creative activity stimulated by excitement of the various sense-organs. The mind gives its chosen form to the material furnished by sensation. The rumbling of a heavy train or the noises of a city street may translate themselves into music in the composer's consciousness; a cab rattling over cobble-stones was one composer's chosen stimulus. The humming of an aëroplane might well inspire a modern symphonist. Cloudy masses in the evening sky have blossomed into cherubs in the imagination of many a Raphael. Darwin found scientific reflections stimulated by music; Wagner's sense of the dramatic was heightened by the presence of rich fabrics and colors. Schiller's inspirations were increased by the odor of rotten apples.

But it is not only the imagination of poets and artists and composers that is stimulated by sense-activity. We every-day mortals also have seen roses blossom in the glowing coals, golden cities shimmering in sunset skies, famous faces staring at us from picture-rocks. One of the duties of the motor-bus driver in the National Park tours is to exercise the tourist's imagination (and his neck) by mile-long admonition to behold crouching camels, skied cathedrals, Ford driving his car, Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation.

The question that concerns us here is the possibility of handling such exercise systematically and developing a technic for scientific training of the imagination.

For arousal of the visual imagination, I have found *crystal-gazing* valuable. The crystal-ball is widely used in occult circles as the medium for materializing subliminal knowledge, lost memories, and spirit-communications. My employment is of course for a much more modest purpose, namely, to give substance and illusionary vividness to visual imagery.

The ball is placed on a black background and the eyes focused steadily upon it. As attention fatigues, the ball grows nebulous and misty, and when the mists disperse visions appear. These visions arise from the deeps of one's own consciousness. They are an expression of nothing supernatural except in so far as they reveal to us unknown possibilities in our nature. With the fatiguing of attention we are self-hypnotized and no longer hypercritical (which means death to our inspirations). An extended range is given to consciousness and images become hallucinatory.

Personally I find the crystal an excellent device for obtaining landscape settings for imaginative work or for rendering visual memories more vivid. To cite an example from my experience: Desiring a fantastic image for a poem I gaze into the crystal and see there a great avenue with double rows of gigantic tapers stretching through the night of an amazing jungle. The candles of civilization piercing dimly a strange and savage wilderness give me just the figure I desire.

Shell-hearing emancipates some imaginations. It is similar in principle to crystal-gazing. The far-off murmur of the ocean becomes a stimulus for the auditory imagination which then gives it form as words or music. The following experiment, inadequately carried out, I report as suggesting a possible procedure: I chose as a subject a girl of great originality and strong auditory preoccupation to determine if possible whether she could be led to give poetic expression to her poetic ideas. Placing her in a comfortable position and instructing her to relax, I gave her a shell to hold at her ear and then read to her in a low voice poetry with an accentuated Swinburnian swing to it. My expectations were confirmed. After a while the vague murmur began to beat rhythmically in time with the poetry and occasionally the murmur shaped itself into words and phrases. When I ceased reading, the subject began to give in rhythmic form her reverie-ideas.

The imagination may smell out inspiration. That odors are particularly potent in revival of emotional memories is a commonplace of popular psychology although experiment in the laboratory has failed to dis-

close any peculiar associative liveliness for odors. In literature, in any case, the use of odors as a means of summoning memories from the vasty deep has been used most effectively. The *Sick-abed Lady* recovers knowledge of her former life from a whiff of mingled ether and tobacco. A faint mignonette fragrance is the phantom presence in "The Witching Hour." The smell of blood haunts *Lady Macbeth;* and a loathsome odor almost prohibits my reading of Kipling's "Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes." Zola is the great odorist of literature. He is said to characterize every personage by his smell. One is "like a great nosegay of strong scent"; another has a "good fresh perfume of autumn fruit."

But do odors convey any definite suggestions of personality or plot to the average person?

I tried the following experiment: Two series of odors were selected with some care. The first series contained four odors chosen in the hope of effecting a humorous combination of smells. The second group was composed of three odors and thought by the experimenter to be a sentimental combination. The odors were numbered and presented to the subjects, one series at a time, in bottles uniform in size and shape.

The instructions were as follows for each series: "Uncork each bottle in the order indicated by the numbers. Inhale the odor passively. Allow it to suggest a personality. After getting a character suggestion from each odor, weave the personalities into a plot."

Series I contained four odors as follows: (1) nitrobenzol; (2) mutton-tallow; (3) cloves; (4) asafetida.

Dentistry, cosmetics, shoe-polish, candle and candy-making, and baking are associations called out by these odors; hence by easy transition we get dentists, painted ladies, boot-blacks, and cooks in our odorous stories.

Heavy and light odors, sickening and cooling ones suggest easy analogies with characters. A more subtle utilization of odors comes in the arousal of vague emotional suggestion. Mutton-Tallow is a hypochondriacal old man, rolled in cotton and clothes to protect himself from the weather, continually warming himself by the fire; or the owner of a candle-factory, wealthy but grouchy and heavy-set; or fat and wheezy. One can scarcely imagine Mutton-Tallow in a tight-fitting Norfolk jacket; he is bound to be formless because of excess of clothes or excess of flesh. Cloves appeals more to one's sense of comfort than to the eye. He is a busy producer of Life-Savers, careless of appearances, or a painless dentist.

Interesting complications arise in bringing these commonplace folk into a story-plot. One embryo writer does it as follows: No. 1 is a boot-black, with patched overalls, and dirty face; No. 2 a wealthy, grouchy candle-manufacturer, fond of showing his authority; No. 3 an old-fashioned dentist; No. 4 a stout woman, working in a pickle-factory, red-faced, gingham-clad. No. 1 is son of No. 4, run down by No. 2 in his car near the office of No. 3, into which he is carried. No. 4 appearing on the scene of action threatens No. 2 with court action; No. 2 reacts brutally and is skilfully anesthetized by No. 3, who sends for an officer and presents him with an enormous bundle. I pass over the plot-untangling.

Series II was composed of the following odors: (1) faint heliotrope, (2) thyme, (3) bergamot. I considered it a sentimental series of odors and it actually did suggest to scentees the eternal triangular situation and somewhat similar developments. I had not erred in thinking Heliotrope and Bergamot were women. Heliotrope—delicately feminine, very fair, overly sweet, given to wearing flowered organdies and filigreed silver. Bergamot—a brunette, over-truthful and frank, who with cool candor confesses to No. 2 a past, delicately gray. Thyme—a very, very good man, hyperfastidious, affianced to No. 3 until her confession of school-girl flirtations and expurgated escapades estranges him and throws him into the arms of Heliotrope.

The interesting outcome of the experiment with odors was the frequency with which Series I suggested humorous complications. Humorous stories are the rarest of varieties. Hence the suggestion is made that teachers of short-story writing try what they can do to stimulate humor by the use of odors. It would be perfectly possible for directors of correspondence courses to send out as lesson-assignments scented powders wrapped in the immemorial powder fashion but to be taken *mentally*, instead of internally. Editors too might try the plan on their contributors. Who knows how much stimulation might be added to the already exciting check by having it scented? And rejection-slips, if properly perfumed, might suggest whole novels.

Music hath charms that stir as well as soothe. That music frequently arouses the visual imagination is proved by many reports in scientific journals on its

potency in evoking lovely landscapes, dancing fairies, marching platoons. Moods may be summoned at will. Schumann said of one of Schubert's marches that it "brought visions of ancient Seville, with ladies and dons in high heels, with jeweled daggers, stepping in stiff, stately wise through the sunlit Spanish streets." Titles sometimes assist the halting musical imagination. But beware of mixing them. A young lady whose Victrola record carried, on one side "In a Clock Shop" and on the other "A Hunting Scene," frequently heard galloping steeds when she should have heard galloping clocks.

But is music able to evoke stories and characterize personalities? Some auditors get linked episodes from music but the complications are simple ones, events being subordinated to mood and atmosphere. A few composers have written novels in measures or tried by motifs to suggest personalities. But, on the whole, music is only vaguely suggestive of individualized personalities. It does not give you a bowing acquaintance with its dramatis personæ.

My students in fact usually stare at me blankly when I give them a musical phrase and ask for a personality in exchange. But for me the personality-suggestion in a musical phrase is very potent. Hum to yourself or play on the piano the following bars:

You understand, I am sure, why the measures make me think of a garrulous lady who after a prolonged mono-

logue wonders why she is hoarse and on the verge of losing her voice.

The indirect inspirational value of music in arousing creative activity is very great. Laboratory studies on stimulation of mental activity by music are in progress, encouraged by Mr. Edison, who is much interested in the psychology of music.

Experiment with social stimulations. Stimulating the imagination by coöperative work is certainly worth trying. Many great art-products, notably cathedrals and dramas, are the outcome of composite creation. The Beaumont-Fletcher and Erckmann-Chatrian partnerships are best known.

But the teacher who wishes to develop a composite play or story should carefully think out the technic or procedure, otherwise the construction will fall like a house of cards at the first rude touch. The following points should be considered: How large may the group be that is to collaborate? How should it be constituted? What should be the plan of procedure?

My own experience suggests limiting the number of collaborators to six or eight. Usually a few of the group will prove useful merely in fertilizing the inventive processes of one mind by those of another through the multiplication of associations and the general emotional stimulation due to social contact. The group will gradually decrease in size as work proceeds.

In choosing the group in the first place one's subtlest knowledge of personalities must be employed. One is trying out a delicate sort of alchemy, getting individuals to work together. There are occasional individuals who cannot fuse their thoughts with those of others. Not that

they are too original; only too individualistic. Their ideas may be too fantastic, too grotesque for others to follow. They should never be given a main part to write but may contribute an original bit here and there.

Antagonistic personalities need not be shut out of this group. Often sparks fly when such personalities clash. One of the best composite stories I ever succeeded in getting written came from the conflict between a young man and woman who hated each other cordially. The plot developed tartly.

The directing force throughout must be furnished by the leader, one with sufficient authority to keep the activity going and to direct it into other channels when it blocks in a given direction or flies off at too great a tangent. The leader should be able to fuse personalities and paragraphs, editing both as necessary.

My procedure in composite play-writing is to get a group together and encourage the members of it simply to think aloud, give utterance to any plot-idea, however absurd it seems on the face of it, however foreign to any other. The first step is to get ideas flying about in the fashion of social conversations. Social stimulation really avails in release of ideas.

As leader in a group I entertain cordially each idea as it appears, attempting throughout to see how many of them may combine in a plot; how many of them merge naturally into a unit-scheme; which of them suggest distinctive characters; which of them suggest dramatic scenes. If the group is well known from the psychological side it is possible to solicit material from particular individuals in it. From one's visualist one

asks for suggestions as to setting, from one's humorist for humorous complications, and so on.

After the first session the leader reduces the suggestions made to some sort of system; a plot is organized and read to the group for criticism, further suggestions, elaboration of characters, and the like. At this point members of the group begin to develop affection for different episodes or different characters that are in process of making and such preferences are noted. At this stage also some of the group drop out and only those whose interest is waxing go on with the work.

The parceling out of the plot for development may be the next step or, possibly preceding it, the writing of character-sketches in order to fixate and render distinct the character-parts. Distinctive gifts and individual prepossessions must be considered in assigning plot-development—descriptive bits to one, dramatic scenes to another, transitional portions to a third, climaxes to a fourth.

This mass of material goes finally to the leader for editing. Much of this work consists in blending material, erasing inconsistencies, adding necessary episodes, easing the shift from one style to another without losing the variety that gives charm to composite work, and in polishing paragraphs and ideas.

The possibility of playing upon the creative activities of clever people and producing harmonious results is exceedingly fascinating. Very likely such social collaboration accounts for many triumphs in the history of drama-writing which to-day we attribute to the solitary genius.

J. E. D.

CHAPTER V

NAMES AND CLOTHES AS LITERARY ACCESSORIES

If the fair *Juliet* had put her famous question "What 's in a name?" to the writers of "Times" Personals she would have learned, as shown in a preceding chapter, that sometimes there is much—too much—in a name, and sometimes too little. Sometimes it gives you away when you don't want it to and sometimes it does n't when you do.

Even the modern psychologist could have pointed out the fallacy in *Juliet's* love-logic. He would have told her that neither Shakspere nor fate intended to conceal her lover when naming him. The wherefore of being *Romeo* is to be *Romeo!*

A name is a focus of associations, hinting all manner of subtle relationships such as nationality, social level, professional affiliations, emotional symbolism, parents' hopes and ambitions and secret dreams. Consider the fine story of the Italian mother whose three sons were named Raphael, Angelo, and Leonardo. How inevitably that family nourished a famous sculptor! Or Robert Frost's poem "Maple" of a girl's and woman's hidden life centered around the parental secret symbolized by that most quaint of given names.

A name is like a spot-light turned successively upon

each dramatic star in life's cast. In the hands of a skilful manipulator of stage effects it can work marvels. The individual who intends to achieve greatness should demand from his ancestors a name that sticks to the memory like a cockle-burr to a rough serge. For group-memory is as treacherous as is the memory of the individual and lets names slip from it after a casual introduction quite as unceremoniously. Therefore advertising devices must be applied to names of celebrities, just as they are to brands of breakfast-food or of preserved fruits. Those who hope to be much in the public eye must also consider the public's ear and seek the euphonious, the dignified, the rememberable name.

It 's rather a pity that the advantage is given here to emancipated slaves, clever criminals, and quick-witted actresses who name themselves and that politicians and candidates for the Presidency may be penalized by their grandfathers. Yet Chance herself sometimes takes a hand in the game and gives a great candidate a name of traditional splendor or one with a twist to it that hooks the community memory.

Industrial psychology has recently become interested in this matter of intriguing the public memory by choice of a name, say for a firm. Dr. Roback asks, for example, "If Smith and Stanft were to start business together, would it be more advantageous to have the names stand as they were just mentioned, or would it be more advisable to reverse the order and call the firm Stanft & Smith?" Feminists are asking similar questions about the naming of matrimonial firms.

Experiment shows that with repetition the unfamiliar

name becomes a more effective stimulus than a familiar one is; but that a familiar name may be used to keep the unfamiliar one in focus until repetition has had a chance to stamp in the latter. The investigator concluded "that a combination of names possesses a greater immediate memory-value if the more familiar component of the combination appears last, and the less familiar first." Stanft & Smith then is preferred by science to Smith & Stanft.

From this long introduction it may be gathered that naming the children of one's fantasy is both an absorbing and an important matter. Not always, however, need writers go so far afield as Dickens with his *Chuzzlewit,* his *Smangle,* his *Snevellici.*

Some interesting experiments have been carried out in the laboratory concerning this matter of naming characters in fiction, but before reporting them let us call attention to some curious leads in the history of literature, such for example as the Victorian use of skeletonized words in place of names, quite like an up-to-date mental test of the poor reader! In such novels *Lady Gw-n-ver* flirts with *Lord La-ce-t* or the *Countess W----k* condescends to the *Tr--bad--r.* Royalty itself may be introduced into fiction in this discreet way with no danger of lese-majesty, and through the tattered disguise one may inspect the gold mantle and the purple hose. Our treatment of modern rulers is somewhat less gentle. Instead of skeletonizing them we pad them alphabetically with malice aforethought; we have our *Vanderghouls* and our *Astorbilts.*

Simple-hearted novelists have frequently indulged in

broad hints to their readers in naming a character. They have no desire to deceive us about *Mr. Stout* or *Mr. Glum.*

Trollope, particularly, was a model of truthfulness. Meet *Dr. Proudie* and his magnificent lady, just recently become Bishop of Barchester. Of course *Dr. Proudie* was not the man to allow anything omitted that might be becoming to his new dignity; and of course *Mrs. Proudie* was "habitually authoritative." No need for Trollope to tell us—though he insists upon it—that *Mrs. Quiverful* has "fourteen unprovided babies"! We might have guessed so much though not perhaps so many. Particularly happy was Trollope's christening of the great London doctors *Sir Lambda Mewmew* and *Sir Omicron Pie.* Something cryptic and intriguing belongs by right to the letters of the Greek alphabet. So much every college student learns in college, and that too without taking the old-fashioned classical course. Only nowadays *Lambda Mewmew* suggests a different diagnostic method and *Omicron Pie* a more deadly form of surgery.

The humorist, by intention or otherwise, has of course hit upon the device of misapplying names, using left-handed hints, as it were. The big lady is named *Tiny;* the little piccaninny christened *George Washington Napoleon;* the lively Spaniard miscalled *MacPherson.* Explanations are then in order and so one makes easy descent to the story.

The "Times" Personals throw considerable light on the motives that operate in the unsophisticated when giving or assuming a name; they are worth careful study

from this point of view. Sometimes the time or the place is the very simple clue to identification. Thus a correspondent is addressed as Eiffel Tower or as June Roses, as Omaha or November. Or an article of apparel is stressed. Blue Collar may write to White Gloves, or The Dark Lady in the Persian Lamb Coat be addressed.

Correlative names may suggest personal relationships. Bigdog sends a message to Kitten; May Fly a token to Squirrel; B Major conveys a hint to B Minor; or Bandelero remonstrates with Signora.

Delightful character-glimpses may be had through the key-hole of names as for example:

> NIBBLENUTS.—Greetings. Why no letter?—Twinkletoes.

I know just what Nibblenuts and Twinkletoes look like and how they would act. Ditto for the addressee of the following:

> MOST BEAUTIFUL BOBBIEDAZZLER. —May you one day learn to think of him, who ever thinks of you, as other than —The Bore.

But I suspect that The Bore is able to assume a character as well as a name. The amount of strain he is willing to put on one comma is tantalizing.

> WILL-O'-THE-WISP.—'Tis a merry hunt but worth every minute of the time spent. You have now two moves only. What an extraordinary escape. My reward is in sight.—Hunter.

Of Will-O'-The-Wisp I know everything except the sex.

BLUE MOON.—Suggest your remarks misunderstood; might be inclined to discuss if way was opened up.—Dutch Oven.

One gets character contrast here, the unimaginative and somewhat slow Dutch Oven failing to catch the drift of Blue Moon's cryptic remarks until some hours after the conversation was over. One meets men like that!

Character revelations are apparent in the following:

GWENNY.—Because I never rave nor rant are you so shallow as to dream that I feel nothing?—Laughing Cavalier.

PINCE-NEZ.—Sorry I could not convey a fuller apology.—Galerie Bleu.

CHOC.—How's that? Be more explicit; it is unbearable without you. Can you telephone? Memory of June always remains.—Boy Blue.

OISEAU—'Sawful.—Boy Blue.

Surely the Laughing Cavalier, Boy Blue, and Pince-Nez need no further introduction, but I should require a letter of recommendation from the correspondents below:

GREEN MAJOLICA.—Not as yet.—Cornish Clay.

The laboratory investigation on the psychology of names previously referred to concerned two questions:

(1) Can the physiognomy or mere look of a name create a mental picture of a person?

(2) Is it more likely to suggest a type of character rather than a visualization of an individual?

One of the most interesting chapters on seeing with the mind's eye is that which relates to the visualization of persons. Some seers possess most lifelike acquaintances. In realistic fashion they imagine their relatives, their friends, even themselves! Others are born cartoonists, emphasizing or even exaggerating a particular feature. Sometimes a nose appears the only distinct landmark in their picturing of a bit of facial geography, or nothing may be present in their thought of another but a pair of curved eyebrows over very wide-open lidless eyes!

But most curious of all are the images we form of persons whom we have never seen but whose acquaintance we have been led to anticipate or desire. Most of us have been startled when brought face to face with the reality. What a shock when the tall black-haired severe schoolma'am of our anticipation is found to be small, blond, smiling shyly. Particularly do we visualize story-book characters so vividly that often our mental illustrations clash abruptly with those of the illustrator. Better to leave the portraiture wholly in the hands of the novelist who can accomplish strange marvels by subtle indirection.

To return, however, to the laboratory. Does the novelist's magic go so far that he can suggest by a proper name not only a certain pattern of temperament but the very looks of a character? Were Dickens's

proper names coined, as has been suggested, with such intention? Were his curious word-physiognomies invented to mirror facial curves and angles or only angles of temper?

Says Professor Claparède, discussing the representation of unknown persons (quoted by English in the "American Journal of Psychology"):

The physiognomy of the proper name certainly plays a part. The sound of the name has an affective tone which coöperates in the elaboration of its mental representation. Other things equal, names consisting of heavy or repeated syllables call forth images of fat, heavy-set, bloated, or slightly ridiculous individuals; a short and sonorous name, on the other hand, suggests slender and active persons, etc. *Monsieur Patapoufard* would evidently be of a type quite different from that of *Monsieur Flic*. . . . It is not without intention that Daudet has created the name *Tartarin,* Dickens that of *Pickwick,* Flaubert those of *Bouvard* and of *Pecuchet.*

Claparède believed that the names cited would produce "a similar effect upon all readers," but experiments carried out in the psychological laboratory at Cornell University indicated great diversity in the suggestive power of a particular name for different readers.

One investigator writes:

We conclude that the psychological response to unknown proper names is extremely variable. It depends not only upon imaginal type but also upon associative and attitudinal factors which differ widely in individual observers.

Highly responsive persons give, however, most interesting accounts of their reactions to proper names. Let me illustrate by the following report of how one psychologist was affected by the name Grib:

Had a feeling for him as quickly as I heard the word; felt Grib myself, i. e., obstinate, persistent, muscular, common-sense; as if I would fight for anything I thought mine; would be surprised if any one should rebel against my authority.

Pictorial representations in response to proper names are, it appears, less common than notions of a type as illustrated above. But I find them common occurrences in my experience.

The bare look of certain names in the Personals give me a photograph of certain individuals.

BUZFUZ.—Him no big medicine man.—Woggles.

Buzfuz I see plainly. He is young, large, gray-eyed, with tousled mouse-colored hair and clothes askew. This picture comes from the strategic position of the z's.

The message to Buzfuz gives me a notion of his personality. He is brilliant but lacking in self-confidence, and not long out of medical college. And now I notice his beautiful hands, those of the born surgeon. I understand why Woggles—cheerful sinner—is trying to buck him up by commenting on an already successful classmate.

GOLLIWOG.—Breakers ahead.—Sundial.

The physiognomy of Golliwog is suggested by the look of the word, or if you are more sensitive to sounds than to sights, by the sound of it. Golliwog is—or ought to be—a regular grasshopper of a man, with sprawling movement and loose-jointed mind. He is always finding breakers ahead, stumbling over chairs and hairpins.

> SKEETER.—Too early for you: You appear later.—Spiro.

Always too early for Skeeter, sharp-nosed, narrow-eyed blade of a man, whose stature is properly stated in inches!

> TERRY.—The brilliancy of your notion leads me to think that you are of a xylophagous species.—Vi.

You 'll get a perfectly definite picture of the xylophagous Terry, if you 'll look him up in the dictionary, as I did. Try it! He 's there.

In any case it behooves the novelist to take considerable thought of the reader in naming his characters. Perhaps, of laboratory reports, that of Dr. Roback helps him most. He must somehow intrigue the public's memory by his choice of a name, and this he does by combining in one name something strange and arresting, something home-keeping and familiar.

A name constitutes a garment of the spirit; other, more material, garments must also be provided. Dressmaking on the fictional level has in fact much to commend itself to the individual luxurious in taste but straitened in purse or unskilful with needle. It is sur-

prising that it is not more indulged in by frugal fabricators.

Lady novelists occasionally succumb to temptation and present their heroines with wardrobe trunks filled to overflowing with delicious confections: lingerie frothing with filmy lace, mandarin coats rich in Oriental embroideries, boudoir-gowns slashed and sashed with artless art. Reading their pages is quite as stimulating as poring over a fashion-journal.

Men novelists are more sketchy in description; their hints are less practical. They delight in silver chiffons and iridescent roses; in irresistible slippers and delightful bonnets. Obviously their attention is too often diverted from the bonnet to the escaping curl; from the pretty slipper to the prettier ankle. Conrad, after designing an intriguing gown of pale blue embroidered silk for his alluring lady of "The Arrow of Gold," adds "Within the extraordinary wide sleeve, lined with black silk, I could see the arm, very white with a pearly gleam in the shadow."

Dressing a character properly may be an achievement of the historic, the racial, the religious imagination, as witness Hergesheimer's carefully wrought descriptions of *Taou Yuen's* elaborate toilettes, in "Java Head." For example:

A long gown with wide sleeves of blue-black satin, embroidered in peach-colored flower petals and innumerable minute sapphire and orange butterflies, a short sleeveless jacket of sage green caught with looped red jade buttons and threaded with silver and indigo high-soled slippers crusted and tasseled with pearls. Her

hair rose from the back in a smooth burnished loop. There were long pins of pink jade carved into blossoms, a quivering decoration of paper-thin gold leaves with moonstones in glistening drops, and a band of coral lotus buds. Pierced stone bracelets hung about her delicate wrists, fretted crystal balls swung from the lobes of her ears; and clasped on the ends of several fingers were long pointed filigrees of ivory.

Usually it suffices to suggest sketchily the fashions of the day, for all readers follow fashion. But one may ask, not inappropriately, what fashion follows. The psychology of clothes—not to mention clothes philosophy, for which one must still go to Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus"—draws largely upon two branches of the science, namely, social psychology and the psychology of art.

Social psychology makes much of prestige, that curious psychic aura that envelops some personalities so notably and is just as notably absent from others. Prestige is conferred by great size, great wealth, social position; by worldly success, acknowledged character and reputation. In the absence of knowledge it is pretty largely determined by personal appearance, and personal appearance is to a great degree a matter of clothes and of avoirdupois, so that fashion—unconsciously shrewd—rings changes upon a few notes only and seeks to create personal prestige by creating illusions of size, wealth, success, age, authority.

Turn the leaves of the fashion-books of the centuries. How many are the devices for increasing height and apparent weight! Note the high hats of the *Normandy*

Belle and of Richard Harding Davis's favorite *Van Bibber*. Note the ample Roman toga, the Elizabethan ruff, the colonial peruke, the Victorian hoop-skirt and leg-o'-mutton sleeve, the Parisian hat of a thousand cherries. One can easily by taking thought and a few dollars add several inches to one's stature.

Prestige may be created also by symptoms of wealth. Here a diamond on the hand is worth several birds on the head, although even a decapitated peacock in the aforementioned situation is always a scream. Wealth creates leisure and such leisure is attested by wearing perishable and impractical clothes. High-heeled slippers and shoe-horn skirts are devised for stationary advertising.

The prestige which depends upon authority and success may also be suggested by clothes. Bishop and hobo must dress the part. Military tactics depend greatly upon the uniform and upon official insignia; chevrons and epaulettes, oak-leaves and stars have inspired many a man in the rank and file. It has been suggested by Walter A. Dyer writing in "The Bookman" that authors too should wear distinguishing insignia—"two crossed quills, as being less complicated than a typewriter . . . one stripe on the sleeve might serve to indicate that the author had written a book that had sold 10,000 copies, two stripes 20,000, and so on, with gold braid for the six best sellers."

In some epochs and localities age brings prestige, hence the powdered hair; when youth is the more prestigious, the powder is applied differently.

We are willing enough to make capital out of prestige,

but it 's the last thing we sell over the counter, hence the pathos in some of the Personals. One does not like to think of Cinderella in Sackville Street poverty-stricken and advertising:

> A NEW ECONOMY.—EVENING SHOES RECOVERED in Satins and Brocades, by Cinderella.

And here 's another that brings a mist to the eyes:

> MAGNIFICENT SILK BROCADE FRINGED SHAWL given by Queen Victoria to owner's mother. Make lovely Court dress. 100gns.

There is, however, an art of clothes as well as a sociology. Old-time fashion books yield, occasionally, styles whose beauty is attested by their continued appeal to the eye. Lines simple and gracious as those of nature; fabrics woven of summer clouds and dyed autumnally.

Writers on esthetics have much to say of empathy, which is interpreted to mean our identification with objects and personalities in our environment because of subtle mimicry of their movements and postures. We are one with the ocean, the wind, the prairies, because we have ebbed and flowed with the tides, swept through undulating trees, followed long shadows to the far horizon.

So too fabrics and fashions are delightful in so far as they make us one with delightful things, create illusions of freedom and ethereal lightness. Floating draperies charm us because we float in the breeze with them; rich velvets because they anchor us right royally.

The sociology and esthetics of clothes are obviously

written from very different slants. It is difficult to reconcile art with artifice, beauty with display. But the novelist has a better chance of doing this than the modiste has. He may trust much to the reader's imagination, which will easily conjure up the most fashionable cut of wings for his angels, and of halos for his saints, and think them beautiful because à la mode.

J. E. D.

CHAPTER VI

TRICKS OF THE LITERARY IMAGINATION

The study by scientists of dream-personalities and the characters of folk mythologies has thrown much light upon certain devices of literary craftsmen, adopted by them quite innocently, with no sense of kinship to those shrewd imps of the subconscious life who manufacture dreams and religions.

In dream fabrication two methods of character-making are especially noticeable; namely, creating characters by fusion of real personalities known in the waking state, and creating them by splitting personalities into diverse traits which are then personified.

In creation by fusion very unlike individualities may be amalgamated usually by virtue of some common possession, say red hair or a crooked smile. Fusion on the basis of a superficial resemblance may give us a most complex and incalculable character. Or in the fusion differences may be blurred and only common traits stand out, as in Dickens's *Micawber,* an amalgam of the novelist's father and Leigh Hunt.

Composite photography of this sort is a favorite pastime of the literary camera-man. It has given us the type-characters of the stage, the black-browed villain, the unsophisticated ingénue, the ladylike parson. Such

characters are unfortunately at home only in conventional settings. They are too frail to stand a change in altitude.

The splitting of a personality into two or more is as common in dreams and literature as it is infrequent in life. Sometimes it is done to emphasize a particular trait, sometimes to point a contrast.

In mythology, "doubling" of the principal characters is a common device. Says Dr. Ernest Jones in writing of this in the "American Journal of Psychology":

> The chief motive for its occurrence seems to be the desire to exalt the importance of these characters, and especially to glorify the hero by decoratively filling in the stage with lay figures of colorless copies whose neutral movements contrast with the vivid activities of the principals.

Various constituent traits of the hero may be embodied in subordinate characters. Or the tyrannical father of the family romance splits into father *and* tyrant. Sometimes the split-off tyrant becomes the hero's grandfather as in the Greek legend of Perseus, or the hero's uncle, as in the Hamlet legend.

A classic way of effecting a doubling is to imitate nature and to bring *twins* on the scene of action. The myth of the founding of Thebes gains in solemnity and dignity by the introduction of the twin founders, Amphion and Zethos. So also the myth of the founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus.

In literature "splitting" and "doubling" of personalities are manipulated in a great variety of ways.

Shadow personalities may follow the main characters so as to underscore or emphasize a given trait. Echo personalities are used to give repetition to the wise and witty sayings of the philosopher-hero. The personal servant was at one time an excellent mirror for master or mistress. One side of *Portia* and one of *Bassanio* is head-lined by the introduction of *Nerissa* and *Gratiano,* colored shadows of more complex personalities.

The twin-motif has of course been used extensively to complicate the plot, to enlarge the hero's sphere of action, to play in comic fashion upon illusions of recognition. "The Comedy of Errors" gives both the twin-motif and the shadow-motif. *Antipholus of Ephesus* and *Antipholus of Syracuse,* shadowed each by his *Dromio,* are irresistibly laughable. Just why, one wonders, is so deep a chord in one's nature stirred by bare repetition? *Mrs. Micawber* knew the appeal: "He is the parent of my children! He is the father of my twins!—I will ne-ver desert Mr. Micawber."

Shakspere's delightful boy and girl twins, *Sebastian* and *Viola* of "Twelfth Night," would, alas, fail to pass the biological censor, who tells us twins are not always twins, and never are when of the opposite sex, and so therefore are not likely to be identical in appearance. But if repeating boy and girl twins must be ruled out of literature, not so reparteeing twins, which leaves us intact Shaw's irrepressible *Dolly* and *Phil* of "You Never Can Tell."

"The Heavenly Twins," who created a furore in fiction in the last century, are not wholly forgotten, as witness the Personal:

> HOPE "Nunky" Remus will come with a thunderstorm and not a few drops just to lay the dust.—The Heavenly Twins.

In the popular mystery story the twin is a safety-device for protecting the lovely and innocent lady who is able thus to keep the center of the stage all the time, reap the rewards of both virtue and lack of it, and marry the irreproachable hero in the final chapter.

Twins are usually employed with comic motive and yet no tragedy in history holds grimmer possibilities than the *Man in the Iron Mask*, twin of the Grand Monarch, dead while yet alive. Something too of horror and unreality clings to Maeterlinck's use of repetition in the "Seven Princesses." It is as though one saw life in a bad mirror that distorts faces and figures, blurring and doubling them in nightmarish fashion.

Often, of course, characters are mere plot-accessories. One by one the character traits are introduced that are needed to develop the story; then self-conscious logic does the rest and attempts to make them self-consistent —as though a real personality ever bothered about consistency!

More destructive still of individuality—both in books and out of them—are the social conventions of the day in which one lives and writes. A novelist's characters must conform to the social ideals of his period. A fragile fainting heroine, all feeling, no thought; a swashbuckler of a hero, sowing wild oats with lavish and insolent hand! Or an aggressive strong-minded suffragist to be wooed back into the paths of racial discretion by a long-suffering far-sighted male philos-

opher! But this field of fashions in character Stephen Leacock has made so thoroughly his own in "Frenzied Fiction" and other essays that we need not advance into it.

The preceding chapters have discussed invention with no appeal to a mysterious endowment called imagination. Psychologists in fact no longer subscribe to the doctrine of mental faculties neatly boxed off in separate compartments. Imagination means very simply that the whole mind is active in a certain way; namely, in the breaking up of old experiences and the using of them in a novel fashion.

The more old experience at its disposal in the form of memories, the richer the imagination. The more concrete the form assumed by memories as visual or auditory or olfactory images, the more vivid the imagination. The keener the sense of relationship, the more subtle the imagination.

But the purpose of imagination is not to copy as does memory or imagery, nor to adjust to outer demands speedily and efficiently as intelligence does; it is definitely constructive of new reality, expressive of a unique personality. One may find individuals of amazing information, of extraordinarily vivid imagery, of superfine intelligence who are not in the least imaginative.

Imagination involves a freedom in the use of material for personal ends, a spontaneity in shaking wholes loose and recombining the elements into new wholes and, above all, an emotional set to consciousness that evokes all the powers of the mind in the service of a master-passion.

Memory is fond of dating mental objects, giving them a local habitation and a place on the calendar. She paints you a picture of San Francisco Bay as it appeared one lovely morning in May, 1915, and you say, "Oh, yes, the Golden Gate at Exposition time. How beautiful it was that Sunday morning!"

But you read a description of the Bay of Naples, and you construct in obedience to the suggestion of the writer a picture of blue waters and enchanting grottoes, a scene resembling perhaps your memory of the Bay of Monterey and yet not intended to mean that bay but another one outside of your personal experience, and so you use with some freedom your mental capital. You put it to new uses. The old material may be slightly modified or greatly modified. Elements from a score of different experiences may be recombined so that the entrancing country of your dreamscape may be constructed from bits of scenery from Alaska and bits from the Bermudas. Your imagined scene may be utterly unlike any ever actually experienced. The autumn wood through which you stray on your sandals of fancy is filled with the light that never was on land or sea, and its golden leaves have been burnished by no earthly frost.

But, to repeat, however far we seem to wander from reality we never paint with colors other than those nature has spread on the palette of the spectrum. We are limited to the original elements given us in the world that excites eye and ear and other organs of sense. We can recombine those elements almost infinitely into original symphonies of colors and sounds and odors but we

cannot create out of the void an absolutely new color nor call into being by sheer will a tone beyond the range of our hearing. Just as the man born blind must build his inner world out of sounds and odors and touches and no colors, so we must build our worlds from the elements given us by our senses.

Concrete imagery of some sort is an aid to the imagination but we should not use imaging and imagining as synonymous terms. Your imagery may be simply the form assumed by your memory of a particular event or situation. Very precise and detailed images are frequently reported by matter-of-fact unimaginative persons. Some of the most extraordinary visualizers I know are most literal-minded. They never get away from things as they experienced them.

Imaginative work requires power to break up experience, to shatter routine, to shake loose elements, to tease out of the closely woven fabric of life delicate threads for a new weaving. Devoid of imagination we are condemned to move always in a limited and narrow world.

But reorganization must follow analysis. The number of elements that can be combined into a whole varies tremendously from one individual to another. Your greatest writer of the short-story may be helpless when confronted with the problem of organizing the life of a hero or of a community. We may learn to write in short-story or novel *form* but to a certain extent we are born short-story or long-story *thinkers*. Individual differences in the natural scope and rhythm of attention are basal to the kind of invention we find most suitable for expression. It is important that the embryo fictionist

decide in what field his natural talents lie. Here again the Personals may be used as a tool for analysis. Does the "Story of Quatre-Vingt-Quatre" or "The Muleteer's Quest" as skeletonized in the games in the last part of the book stimulate you more than the Tick-tock item of Chapter II? If so, you 're probably sentenced to hard mechanical labor that your brother who specializes on the short-story avoids. Of course you have your reward, in anticipated royalties!

The two short sequences of Personals that follow suggest different possibilities of development. Which is best suited to your pen?

Arthur and Irene suggest a snappy short-story.

"Arthur and Irene"

ARTHUR.—You are most distracting.—Irene.

IRENE.—I suppose I am, but so are you. Do write. It 's still cheaper. Pitch into me all you like.—Arthur.

ARTHUR.—Pitch into you as much as I like! I could shake you until your teeth rattled.—Irene.

ARTHUR.—You idiot.—Irene.

ARTHUR.—You don't deserve it, considering the wretched exhibition you made.—Irene.

ARTHUR.—Of course you would go and do the silliest thing imaginable; now we are in a pickle.—Irene.

"The Beach-Comber," on the contrary, outlines a novel best published in serial form, the author himself to be doubtful about the next complication until the day before copy is due. It suggests adventures *ad libitum*.

"The Beach-Comber"

PICCANINNY.—You run? Plenty soon catch up.—Beach-Comber.

CAP.—I have heard the drum in the distance; you know what it portends.—The Beach-Comber.

ALRIGHT CAP.—The Beach-Comber.

CAP.—One of these days I shall get my share, and then.—The Beach-Comber.

The short-story writer need not handle numberless details as the novelist must but he should possess to an even higher degree power of selection. Crystallization of material must take place for both short-story and novel, but crystallization in the short-story must reach a higher degree of perfection.

Crystallization is a miracle of the creative life. Perhaps it is to be understood only under a chemical analogy. It is an outcome of the saturation of the senses or of reflection. The artist who beholds the wayward figures in a landscape suddenly cohere in a picture, fall into a pattern as do the bits of glass in a kaleidoscope; the musician who suddenly catches the melody that binds together vagrant phrases; the fictionist sud-

denly confronted with the master-incident in his story, are alike aware of this curious fact of crystallization.

One gets fine examples of crystallization in the Personals. Possibly necessity is the mother of selection as well as of invention. Rambling costs too much. Some of the Personals are marvels of compression. Thus:

YOU ADAM?

ALEXIS.—I am going to bang the big drum.

PRODIGAL SON.—Left or right?

DAISY and Stan.—Sorry you did n't wait for the shoe.—Dad.

GLAD E and He glad too.

CYRIL.—The links are nearly rusted through.

MELON.—Clubs are; for the rest, "napoo."—Dido.

Paulhan, the French psychologist, has classified the modes of invention under three heads. There are three forms of procedure: (1) development by evolution; (2) development by transformation; and (3) development by deviation.

Sometimes invention moves along straight lines directly towards an end which is so dominating as to sup-

press all tendencies toward digression. Selection in this case takes place without effort as a matter of logical sequence. The classic example of such a type of deliberate invention, dominated by a clear-cut purpose, is Poe's construction of "The Raven," of which he has given us such a detailed description in his "Philosophy of Composition." Sardou and Zola are other writers who moved systematically, without swerving, toward a predetermined goal. In fact, to Zola literary creation seemed so rational a process that he conceived the function of the novel to be identical with that of experimental science. It is only a step from such self-conscious logical technic as Poe's or Sardou's, with its steadfast fixation of attention, to what may be called instinctive invention, invention that moves as inevitably toward its goal but moves so rapidly that all deliberation is abbreviated, short-circuited. The process appears automatic, unconscious.

In development by transformation there is a relative independence of the various elements, any one of which may become the core of accretion and finally usurp the place of the first idea. If too many elements insist upon independent development anarchy may result. But a shift in sentiment or purpose has its own charm. No less a genius than de Musset declared that invention that proceeded in too straight a line lacked the suppleness and charm of the unexpected.

"It is too logical," he complained, "it never loses its head. As for me I often change my route . . . I set out for Madrid and I arrive at Constantinople."

In development by deviation undue evolution of cer-

tain phases may lead to abortive invention or may result in double monsters. The digressions may be longer than the main theme or story. Yet in development by deviation we find by-products often of inestimable value. Irrelevancies lead to new avenues of thought. The search for a riming word may enrich the poem by unexpected associations, and yet that search may take the poem far afield even into the precincts of a riming dictionary. Seemingly irrelevant Personals may be knit together into an entertaining whole.

How many Cameos in the following items can you set in one design?

CAMEO.—Volo, non valeo.—Nordwind.

CAMEO.—Can you call at H. S. on Tues.? —Cliff.

CAMEO.—A cruel mistake. The alliance was a disaster; no one would have imagined the anguish it has caused; we have made fools of ourselves.—Opal.

CAMEO.—Loud but harmless; an empty barrel whose vaporings will soon evaporate when met by Anemone.

CAMEO.—Why try to split hairs? You recall Aug. 8th do you not?—W.

CAMEO.—Why pass me by? Do you cut too big a figure in your new surroundings?—Pep.

CAMEO.—Sorry to hear of distress: bear up for a time; the sun will soon shine again.—R. R.

J. E. D.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT KIND OF MIND THE NOVELIST NEEDS

The fictionist is a fabricator. That is what the word means, the man who makes; the manufacturer, or since the work is done less with the hands than with the mind he had better be called the mentifacturer. The first fictionists were poets because writing was an unknown or rare art and verse is easier to remember than prose, especially when there is a tune to it. The word "poet" means the maker, the creator, one who produces something new.

There has been much theological discussion over the meaning of the verb "create" in the first chapter of Genesis, as to whether the world was made out of nothing or formed out of something that previously existed, a chaotic mass of matter. I do not know how that question was settled—if it was settled. But in the use of the word in relation to the world of literature, science, and art, there is no ambiguity. The creative genius is one who produces something new—a statue, a painting, a poem, a story, a plant, an invention, a piece of music, a dramatic rôle, a physical theory, a chemical compound, a type of architecture, a style in dress, a culinary confection, in short a new idea in whatever form or medium it may be expressed or embodied.

Where he got the material does not matter. The sculptor may chisel his statue out of Carrara marble or cast it out of Montana copper. The painter may hire models or induce his friends to sit for him or use a lay figure or combine the sketches or recollections of types he has seen. So the writer may copy his characters from his associates—which is very dangerous—or borrow them from the classics or piece together scattered observations from his life and reading. Anyhow he does not make his story "out of whole cloth," as the saying goes.

Since a novel necessarily consists of a mixture of fact and fiction the question arises how much may the facts be fictionized? Even the most imaginative of romancers, even a Poe, a Maeterlinck, or a Dunsany, must use earthly clay for the foundation of his fantastic fabrications. A realistic novelist whose aim is to give the impression of actuality must make more plentiful use of ready-made material. The percentage of fact and fiction in the mixture does not matter so long as the whole is sufficiently fused together to make the mass homogeneous. Almost all writers use in part real scenes, such as Broadway or the Strand, make reference to historic events, such as the Civil or the World War, and introduce actual personages, either public characters or acquaintances in disguise. On this point Oscar Wilde is, as usual, dogmatic, paradoxical, and fallacious. He says:

> To introduce real people is a sign of an unimaginative mind. . . . The only real people are the people who never existed, and if a novelist is base enough to go to life for his personages he should at least pretend that they are creations and not boast of them as copies.

If the first statement were true we should have to rule out many of our foremost novelists as having "unimaginative minds." But the advice that real personages should be sufficiently transfigured so as to be unrecognizable is sound—if only for fear of libel-suits.

If a novelist introduces real people and places, actual events and historic characters, how far is he at liberty to go in falsifying them for artistic purposes? The answer to this is—so far as he can without being found out. The amount of permissible distortion depends—if I may put it in scientific terms—inversely on the presumed intelligence of the reader and directly on the square of the distance in time and space. For instance, if you lay your scene in the Piazza di San Marco at Venice it would not be safe for you to put the Campanile on the other side of the Grand Canal because so many people have been to Venice. But you could take more liberties in the arrangement of the architecture of Mecca or Lhasa that are still out of the main line of the personally-conducted tours. Probably even these secret cities will soon be familiar to all of us through the movies and then the novelist will have to walk warily in them. The spread of elementary science has made it unsafe for him to see the new moon in the east as the older novelists did with perfect impunity. While an author wants to contribute to the pleasure of the reader he does not like to contribute the sort of pleasure that consists in pointing out his blunders.

Then, too, some authors have a conscience and are very scrupulous about getting their facts right. Mrs. Humphry Ward is said to have sent over to a friend in

Paris to count the lamp-posts on a certain Paris bridge that she wanted to refer to in one of her novels. Yet in spite of such extreme precautions she was not impeccable. Leslie Stephen, the great English critic, was delighted when he caught her bringing a pair of lovers to Kensington Gardens in the first week in October and making them take chairs, whereas by the providence of the Office of Works chairs are removed from Kensington Gardens on September 30.

This question becomes serious only in the case of historical novels. Here the author has no right to falsify known facts about prominent personages and important events even for artistic effect. Rather should he take delight in weaving his fiction into the warp of fact without displacing a thread of it. When Michelangelo painted the Sistine Chapel he did not ask to have the vaulting changed to suit his painting. No, he fitted his prophets and sibyls into the spaces and with such ingenuity that people will stand and look at them until they get cricks in their necks. If an author will not take the trouble to conform to historical accuracy he would better follow the example set by Anthony Hope in "The Prisoner of Zenda," as so many writers have done, and set his scene in some artificial German principality or Balkan state.

Sir Harry Johnston has, I think, gone farther in combining real and fictitious personages than any other author. In his novels he introduces characters from Dickens and Shaw, characters of his own creation, prominent men and himself. When we open his "Gay-Dombeys" we enter a reception-room where we meet *Mr. and Mrs. Paul Dombey, Henry Irving, Miss Knip-*

per-Totes, Arthur Balfour discussing theology with *Mrs. Humphry Ward, Sir Arthur Sullivan* playing "The Lost Chord," *Frederick Chick, George Du Maurier* taking notes for a "Punch" picture, *Sir James and Lady Tudell, Oscar Wilde* with a yellow carnation, *Sir Barnet-Skettles, Arthur Pinero,* and *Lord Feenix.* As we collect our wits and find out who 's who we realize that half of the guests have walked out of Dickens's novels and the other half out of real life.

Even the highest creative imagination must have material to work on. If Shakspere and Michelangelo had been confined from babyhood in a bare room they could have produced no plays or pictures. How much the author adds to his material, how much constructive or reconstructive work he puts into it depends on circumstances. He may merely shape it by eliminating the unessential, as the sculptor does in making a marble statue, or he may fuse the entire mass of material in the fiery furnace of his imagination and cast it at once into its final form like the sculptor working in bronze. In general I should say that the latter method showed the greater genius and produced the greater literature though the champions of the naturalistic school like Zola would dispute this. Of course in favoring the complete recasting of reality I do not mean that the result is best when most unreal. I do not regard the hundred-armed Siva or the three-headed Cerberus as the highest achievements of the creative imagination.

To "imagine" means primarily to form an image of something not seen at the time, and not a mere memory-

picture. The thing pictured may not be "imaginary" in an absolute sense. It may be real in past or future or elsewhere. A historian may imagine life in ancient Athens and the more accurate and lifelike his depiction the better. The inventor may imagine a machine such as the world has never seen until he makes it actual. We all can imagine what goes on at home when we are away and the stronger our imagination the more successful we are in hitting the truth. Probably the best description of the San Francisco earthquake—I beg pardon, San Francisco fire—was written by Will Irwin in New York for the "Sun" from such fragmentary information as came over the wires and from his own intimate knowledge of the city.

A person gifted with the creative imagination will construct a scene or a character from the slightest hint as a paleontologist will reconstruct a prehistoric animal from a single bone. The surmise of the scientist may be later confirmed or disproved by the discovery of this complete skeleton, but nobody cares whether the novelist is right or wrong so long as the characters he has created have sufficient verisimilitude to deceive us or to convince us.

The inferior novelist combines incongruous traits in the same crude way as the primitive artist who devised the centaur, the mermaid, and the angel by combining part of a man with part of a horse, a fish, and a bird. The result is no more artistic than the drawings we used to make as children by drawing the head of some animal, folding over the paper and passing it on to another who

drew the body and then to a third who added the legs. The mature mind is amazed or disgusted with such monstrosities whatever the skill of the artist.

Nature's method of constructing a character out of preëxistent traits is more subtle. She provides each person with twenty-four chromosomes made from the fusion of forty-eight. Each chromosome carries with it the determinant of a host of characteristics handed down from the remotest ancestors. Thus a man may inherit his blue eyes from his mother and his strong chin from his father. His musical genius from one grandmother and his sharp temper from his other grandmother, his religion from one grandfather and his rheumatism from the other, but all so deftly combined as to make a single and more or less harmonious individual. The artistic author follows nature's method and combines such character-chromosomes as he can find with such skill as he can command to create a personality that may seem to us as real as any living person and may live much longer.

Two kinds of ability, therefore, the novelist needs: (1) the power of acquisition and (2) the power of construction. Both processes may be more or less unconscious. His material multiplies miraculously as he uses it like the widow's cruse of oil.

A friend of mine who wanted to write a great novel set out to earn enough money for his support while working on it. After carefully canvassing the field he came to the conclusion that the cheapest fiction would pay best, that he could make more money by writing for one or two cents a word than for the five or ten that he could have got by taking more pains and publishing in

the more limited field of the better class of magazines. He registered a vow to stop writing cheap stories at the end of one year, no matter how profitable he found the profession. He resigned his salaried position and launched out as a free lance with only three plots for stories in his drawer and some doubt in his mind as to whether he could think up enough to keep him running. He only used one of these, for better ideas came to him and at the end of the year he had a hundred unused plots left over and had earned five thousand dollars. He then wrote a first class novel.

The manufacture of cheap fiction has, like other trades, become more efficient and profitable by organization and division of labor. A man who has to pound out five thousand words or more a day on his typewriter has no time to beat about the bush for higher ideas. Possibly, too, he may be deficient in inventive power although he is a fluent and versatile writer. On the other hand we all know of men who are fertile in invention, who can tell us "good stories" by the hour but could not write one of them, possibly from lack of literary training, possibly from lack of patience, possibly because of some inhibitory complex that paralyzes their imagination whenever they pick up a pen. A man who has this gift and incapacity may find occupation as a professional plotter. In New York City the plotter makes the rounds of his circle of writers as a grocer calls on housewives to take orders. He displays his wares, consisting perhaps of a newspaper clipping, a novel idea, an ingenious complication, a quaint character, an unusual setting, a new theme, and the like. The writer picks out and pays

for any that take his fancy and the plot-peddler packs up the rest and takes them on to his next client.

But the rapid writer may not only lack time, patience, or ability to invent or hunt up plots but also time, patience, or ability to polish up his stuff. So a third party may come into the combination, the finisher, who revises the English, puts in the proper punctuation, and prepares it for the press. Possibly the writer does not write at all but talks his stories into a dictaphone and leaves it to the typewriter girl to transcribe and finish up. Charles Phelps Cushing in his little handbook of advice to the free lance, "If You Don't Write Fiction," says: "I know of several famous magazine-writers who never in their lives have got their material into print in the form in which it was originally submitted. They are what the trade calls 'go-getters.' They deliver the story as best they can and a more skilful stylist completes the job."

Of late it has been often found profitable to add a fourth party, the literary agent, who acts as salesman. An author may be temperamentally unsuited to drive a hard bargain for his own writings and anyhow he may waste as much time selling one story as would suffice him to write another. But the literary agent knows how much each periodical pays and what are the idiosyncrasies of its editor. He therefore does not often waste postage on impossible periodicals or irritate their editors by bothering them with articles that they can not use. He watches the literary market and feels the public pulse like a stock-broker and so advises his clients, the authors, that it is useless for them to write, for instance, any more

war stories at present and they had better turn to home scenes, or that pessimism and muck-raking are on the decline and there is likely to be a brisk demand for optimism and uplift. In this way the literary agent may well earn his 10 per cent. commission.

The motion-picture business, though younger than authorship, has carried systematization and specialization still further. The plot or germinal idea is provided in the synopsis, which possibly may be less than a page and yet bring a high price. This is developed and written out, usually by some one else, in the scenario, and from this a third party prepares the complete continuity which corresponds to the prompt-book of a play. Besides this, several other persons, including the various state censors, may have a hand in the production before it finally appears on the screen.

The process is like the production of the "genuine hand-painted oil paintings" that are thrown in at the price of the gilt frame. They are, I believe, painted simultaneously on a long strip of canvas, one artist putting in the clouds, another the trees and rocks, and a third the cows and people. This saves the time wasted in changing colors and cleaning brushes. Speed and facility increase with practice. No one artist is equally apt at clouds and cows.

Such coöperative production and division of labor, whether employed in painting, motion-pictures, stories, automobiles, or clothing, result in large, rapid, and cheap production of marketable wares but necessarily at a sacrifice of individual distinction. The output is standardized and odd sizes are not kept in stock. The fiction

that follows a formula is more sure of a sale than that which strikes out a new style. Its place is all ready for it. Its audience is seated and waiting. It is freer from faults due to the inevitable deficiencies of an individual and from whatever qualities may offend the general public and interfere with its wide popularity.

But the standardization process in removing idiosyncrasies rubs out originality. The peculiar taste and tang of the author's individuality has been boiled off and has left the residue flat. The prolonged consumption of such factory-made fiction or film induces distaste in the dullest mind and there is a revulsion in popular preference. Then the publisher or producer is left with a lot of material that is "just the same" as that which formerly caught the crowd and he is puzzled to know why it has lost its pulling power. He can not find any fault with its technic. The English is unexceptionable, the construction is correct, the photography better than ever. If the book or picture that now fails to arouse interest had been produced twenty years before it would have created a sensation and set a standard that would now be regarded with despairing admiration. If any one of the novelettes that fill the fifteen-cent magazines had been printed in the eighteenth century it would now be considered by critics to have been a work of genius, a marvel of vivacity, ingenuity and human interest, and it would be required reading as a classic for entrance to college.

The critics would be quite right. Only a genius could have produced such works two hundred years ago but nowadays any diligent writer can turn them out by the

bale. In the fifteenth century only a genius in navigation could cross the Atlantic but any common captain can do it now. Columbus has shown how to stand the egg on its end. An automobile would have been a miracle a century ago. It is as easy now to forge Kipling as to forge Corot. A skilful writer of no originality could write a story of Indian life that if it could have been inserted in that unique volume of "Plain Tales from the Hills" would not appear incongruous from inferiority.

The reason why there is now an overproduction of the sort of fiction that once was a rarity is that writers have found out the formula. The reason why readers turn with sudden distaste from a form of fiction with which they have been overfed is because they too have found out the formula. The development of the plot proceeds along familiar lines and there is no surprise or suspense to excite their curiosity. But the sort of writing that has ceased to interest a sophisticated class may find an eager public on another level. The play that bores Broadway because its plot is trite, its characters conventional, and its stage effects familiar will rightly be welcomed with enthusiasm at Pumpkin Center where the opera-house is opened to a "talky" only once a year. A mother, hunting at Christmas for something nice and new for her children's presents, looked with dissatisfaction over the stock of dolls, tops, and whistles and complained to the shopkeeper:

"But these toys are so old!"

"Yes, ma'am," was the reply, "but the children are new."

There is always arising a new generation of readers to whom the old tales may be retold. Out-of-fashion clothing and books must find a place somewhere. The novels that were popular with our grandfathers still hold their own with the "best sellers" of the month; if not in the book-stores, at least in the libraries. The reviewers are preoccupied with the present. They scan the surface of the sea in search of strange craft and take little notice of what has sunk into the literary subconscious. One could not gather from their book talk what is really being read, any more than one could rely upon the fashion column headed "What Is Being Worn" as a guide to the current costumes of the mass of the American people. It takes all sorts of people to make a world and only a small part of them get into print.

I have mentioned the coöperative production of literature not as a model system but to show how many different qualities the novelist needs. If he is to work independently he must be his own plotter, writer, typist, finisher, and salesman. If he is to be successful in every sense of the word he must be original in conception, ingenious in plot development, proficient in character drawing, quick to catch personal peculiarities of dialogue, physiognomy, costume, and mannerisms, acquisitive of all sorts of information, rapid in writing, patient in revision, submissive to correction, sensitive to the fluctuations of public taste, and acute at bargaining.

Literature, like all the arts, is a manifestation of the play impulse. The difficulty the novelist has to solve is how to keep it play when he has to make it work. Play is essentially a release of the spirit from the trammels

of compulsory labor. But play has its laws although they may not be in Hoyle. A man can not get away from himself by getting out of routine. On the contrary he has in spontaneous activity a chance to display his true self. Novels, like dreams, are often more self-revealing than the author realizes. Arnold Bennett is very frank about this, as he is about most things. He says:

Whence and how does the novelist obtain the vital issue which must be his material? The answer is that he digs it out of himself. First-class fiction is, and must be, in the final resort autobiographical. What else should it be? The novelist may take notes of phenomena likely to be of use to him. And he may acquire the skill to invent very apposite illustrative incident. But he can not invent psychology. . . . When the real intimate work of creation has to be done—and it has to be done on every page—the novelist can only look within for effective aid. . . . Good fiction is autobiography dressed in the colors of all mankind.

The necessarily autobiographical nature of fiction accounts for the creative repetition to which all novelists—including the most powerful—are reduced. They monotonously yield again and again to the strongest predilections of their own individuality. Again and again they think they are creating, by observation, a quite new character—and lo! . . . when finished it is an old one—autobiographical psychology has triumphed! . . . No creative artist ever repeated himself more brazenly or more successfully than Balzac. His miser, his vicious delightful actress, his vicious delightful duchess, his young-man-about-town, his virtuous young man, his heroic weeping virgin, his angelic wife and mother, his poor relation, and his faithful stupid servant—each is continually popping up with a new name in the Human

Comedy. . . . Hamlet of Denmark was only the last and greatest of a series of Shaksperean Hamlets.

The reason why the released fancy of the fictionist reaches his readers is because their spirits are also in prison. Like the wives of *Bluebeard* in Maeterlinck's version of the story, they are waiting the arrival of *Ariana* with the key. Some of our best traits are etiolated and atrophied for lack of air and exercise. Even our unsocial tendencies, quite properly confined, may safely be sublimated in romance. So pious people take to pirate stories. The most law-abiding citizen may like to travel in imagination the road to Mandalay "where there are n't no ten commandments[1] an' a man can raise a thirst." The most tender-hearted lady of my acquaintance delights in reading herself to sleep on the gory Polish romances of Sienkiewicz.

Professor Seashore in his "Introduction to Psychology" cites the case of a friend whose dreams before the war had always been of a conspicuously pugnacious character, in strong contrast to the working life of a staid professor. But while he was in the service, even in the midst of battle, his dreams were of a placid character.

So in the spontaneous dreams of sleep, or in the personally-conducted dreams of novel reading, the imagination seeks relief in activities far removed from the customary trains of thought. This is in accordance with the rule of the gymnasium that in play one shall

[1] I never could understand this line for I was taught that the ten commandments originated "somewheres east of Suez."

exercise those muscles that are not employed in one's occupation. But this is easier said than done. One can not say to one's fancies as the teacher says to the pupils at recess, "Now, children, run out and play." The mind is more plastic than elastic. It requires a jerk and a jolt to get it out of its accustomed groove as it does a wheel out of its rut.

It would be vain for a teacher of English composition to say to his students, "Now be original," or, what is much the same thing and quite as difficult, "Now be yourself." They can find out what they are only by trying to be other people. It is therefore good practice for the neophyte author—or the veteran author—to attempt something very different from what he takes to naturally, even something distasteful and difficult, just as his physical director makes him do the exercises that are hardest for him.

I once knew an artist, a fine painter, though his works were of a conventional type. When the futurist and cubist movements first appeared they excited him to furious indignation. He could find no language strong enough to denounce those who were fooling the public into accepting these absurdities as real art. He took an active part in the Fakers' Exhibition that attempted—with difficulty—to parody the new school. To this he contributed a canvas on which he had drawn the most grotesque human forms he could imagine and splashed them with the crudest colors. When he got the canvas back he set it on the easel in his studio where it made an amusing contrast with the stately historical paintings that surrounded it. But as he looked at it it seemed

to him that something might be made of it so he began to paint it over into the semblance of real life and finally turned out a picture that he was proud to own. It was not at all in the modern manner that he hated, yet it was a new departure for him and more original than his previous work. The very effort to outdo the futurists in extravagance had broken the bonds that had bound him to the traditional forms and freed his genius to take its own course. Many a good poet has begun as a parodist. Kipling began his poem on the American spirit:

If the led striker call it a strike
  Or the papers call it a war,
They know not much what I am like,
  Nor what he is, my avatar.

as a silly parody on Emerson's "Brahma":

If the red slayer thinks he slays,
  Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
  I keep and pass and turn again.

Yet before he got through with it he had put in some of the best lines he ever wrote.

E. E. S.

CHAPTER VIII

WHERE THE WRITER GETS HIS PLOTS AND PERSONALITIES

The mind of a novelist picks up ideas spontaneously and unconsciously wherever he goes, as an electrified glass rod attracts bits of paper and straws. Names, phrases, and incidents are stored away for future use in his head or notebook. Any literary biography will supply examples of this faculty.

Dickens caught the name of *Pickwick* from a stage-coach running between Bath and London and then had the cheek to make *Sam Weller* accuse the proprietor of stealing the name from his hero:

"Not content with writin' up 'Pickwick' they put 'Moses' afore it, vich I call addin' insult to injury, as the parrot said ven they not only took him from his native land but made him talk the English langwidge arterwards.—Ain't nobody to be whopped for takin' this here liberty, sir?"

The appearance and attire of *Mr. Pickwick* were described and prescribed by the publisher, Mr. Chapman, who had seen such a looking man at Richmond. Dickens drew *David Copperfield* from himself. D. C. is really C. D.

Two of the best American short stories, O. Henry's "Springtime à la Carte" and Edna Ferber's "Roast-Beef Medium," came from the uninspiring items of a restaurant menu.

Ethel Kelly, walking on Riverside Drive, saw a young girl elaborately dressed coming out of a handsome apartment-house. There was a sadness and aged expression about her face that attracted the attention of Miss Kelly and she began to imagine a story that would account for it. She picked a name out of the telephone-directory and wrote "Beauty and Mary Blair."

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes in the course of his medical reading happened upon a case of a woman who had been bitten by a snake and was said to show reptilian characteristics every year. This gave him the plot for his gruesome tale of "Elsie Venner."

But he did not handle the theme with the imagination of Hawthorne who built up "The Scarlet Letter" out of his musings over an old law case in which he happened to find a reference to an enactment of the Plymouth colony in 1658 reading as follows:

> It is enacted by the Court and the Authoritie thereof that whosoever shall commit Adultery shall be severely Punished by whipping . . . and likewise to were two Capital letters viz. A D cut out in cloth and sewed on their upermost garments on their arme or backe.

As starting points for "The Marble Faun" Hawthorne had the furry-eared statue by Praxiteles and a story of a Protestant who had been impelled to confess a crime to a priest. The notebooks in which Hawthorne

records his gropings after "Dr. Gramshaw's Secret" are most instructive reading for the young writer.

The most remarkable instance of the transmutation of crude fact into the pure gold of poetry is "The Ring and the Book," for it gives both the theory and the result of the alchemical process. From a bookstall in the Piazza of San Lorenzo Browning bought for fifteen cents a dry-as-dust report of a Roman murder trial of 1689 and from this he evolved ten poems, each giving a different view of the case but all based upon the same fundamental facts. The "Old Yellow Book" was published in facsimile with critical notes by the Carnegie Institution of Washington and a translation is printed in Everyman's Library. A comparison of the case-book with the poem is well worth making by any one interested in the technic of literary construction for it shows how scrupulously Browning has used every scrap of information the documents contain, following closely his authorities in names, places, dates, and events, often incorporating passages almost literally. Only in one instance does he deviate from a date. This was in changing *Caponsacchi's* rescue of *Pompilia* from April 29 to 23. It is not art but the lack of art that causes some writers to stretch their poetic license to the utmost to cover careless juggling with historic facts.

About twenty years ago, when Owen Wister's Wild West stories of "The Virginian" and "Lin McLean" were published, a literary club of Laramie, to which Miss Downey and I belonged, had the privilege of reading them in parallel with the notes by Dr. Amos W. Barber (*Dr. Amory W. Barker* of the stories) who had

furnished Wister with much of his material.[2] All the places, many of the characters, and most of the incidents were known to members of the club present. We knew the bishop who was "not only a good man but a man." He was Bishop Talbot, later of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. We knew the babies (there were really only two of them) whom the *Virginian* mixed up at the ball by changing their clothes. We had the original and unexpurgated version of the funeral at "Drybone" (old Fort Fetterman) and of the lynching of *Cattle Kate*. This miscellaneous collection of the crude stories that might be heard about any camp-fire where frontiersmen were gathered had been given coherence and added interest by grouping them about two well-defined characters, although the reader will find in the first edition the marks of incomplete amalgamation. It was extremely instructive to observe where and how the art of the novelist had been employed in putting this crude material into literary form, by what selections, condensations, eliminations, and complications it had been made more dramatic and vivid.

But even the slight deviations from the truth which Mr. Wister consciously or unconsciously made are sufficient to offend the literalist.

A friend of mine, a man who had become eminent in his branch of science because he possessed in a marked degree what William James calls "the passion for veracity," naturally had little tolerance for fiction in or out of books and it was only when he was sick and

[2] I published a sort of a key to Owen Wister's stories in the "Congregationalist" in 1903.

helpless that his wife took advantage of the occasion to read to him "The Virginian." In the midst of the story of the honeymoon on the island where the *Virginian* catches trout for supper, she heard a groan from her husband.

"What is the matter? Are you in pain?" she asked.

"Why can't that man tell the truth?" came in despairing tones from the bed.

"What has he said now that is wrong?"

"Why, that stream was not stocked with trout till ten years later," was the answer of the man of science.

Many years ago I met a lady from Simla and naturally began to talk of Kipling, over whom I, like all the young men of my time, was wildly enthusiastic.

But she responded coldly, "We do not think much of Kipling in Simla."

"Well," I admitted, "doubtless he would not be popular in Simla society but I suppose his descriptions of it are true to life."

"Indeed they are not," she responded indignantly. "I know many of the people and incidents he uses in his stories and they are altogether wrong. Some of the remarks that he ascribes to *Mrs. Hauksbee* were really made by *Mrs. Reiver* and he has the *Gadsbys* and the *Gayersons* all mixed up."

But although Kipling may, for obvious reasons, confuse the attributes of his models he is rarely guilty of "miscalling technicalities" as *M'Andrews* would say. I don't know whether he has "The Song of the Tonga-Bar" down right or not, but I know he is correct on the "Song of the Purple Emperor." I am not a judge

of the dialect of the Calcutta bazaar, but I can certify to the accuracy of that of the Kansas City roundhouse. In that marvelous ninth chapter of "Captains Courageous"—which I can never read aloud because of tears in my eyes and a choke in my throat—he has done two things that no other author has ever done: he has told of the joy a man who can handle a time-table takes in routing a car, and he has described a transcontinental trip in flashes of scenery and sensations of noise, jar, and heat that combine to give the hurry of it. Somebody asked Kipling how he got the railroad route worked out so well and he replied, "I simply wrote to the general passenger agent at Chicago and asked what was the quickest way to get a special car from San Diego to Boston." The fishermen's talk and technicalities he picked up mostly in a few days' lounging and listening on the Gloucester wharves and a trip to the cod banks. The rest is genius.

Where Rudyard Kipling got the germinal thought of one of his greatest poems, "M'Andrew's Hymn," is told in the letter prefaced to the poem when it was first published in "Scribner's Magazine," December, 1894:

> And the night we got in, sat up from twelve to four with the chief engineer, who could not get to sleep either—said the engines made him feel quite poetical at times, and told me things about his past life. He seems a pious old bird; but I wish I had known him earlier in the voyage.

O. Henry, like Dante, got his characters from within a few blocks of where he lived. In his window over-

looking Irving Place "he would sit for hours watching the world go by along the street, not gazing idly, but noting men and women with penetrating eyes, making guesses at what they did for a living, and what fun they got out of it when they had earned it."

"But," said O. Henry, "there never is a story where there seems to be one. That 's one rule I always work on."

Caroline Francis Richardson, in telling [8] how O. Henry found inspiration in the narrow dingy streets of the old French Quarter of New Orleans, remarks:

But O. Henry used his "copy" differently from other story-tellers who have found suggestion in New Orleans. In all his stories, wherever placed, he makes use of every detail that will add reality to a character or an occurrence. But he does not introduce localities and localisms merely for their intrinsic interest.

This is an important point. An inferior writer will load up his story with local color merely because he has got it in his note-books and does n't want to waste it.

Henry James, suffering from toothache, felt a wicked impulse to harrow up the feelings of other people. The result was "The Turn of the Screw."

"Jane Eyre" was done on a dare. Emily and Anne Brontë said that a heroine must be beautiful. Charlotte said she would write a novel in which the heroine should be small and plain as herself, and yet be interesting. And she did it.

"Frankenstein" was written by Mrs. Shelley in com-

[8] In "Waifs and Strays."

petition with Byron to pass away the time during a rainy week in Switzerland after they had been reading German ghost-stories.

Hall Caine says he gets the plots of his stories out of the Bible.

Kipling—well, he cites high precedent for his practice:

> When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre,
> He 'd 'eard men sing by land and sea;
> An' what he thot 'e might require,
> 'E went and took—the same as me!

Molière had the same motto: "Je prends mon bien où je le trouve." Or as Lowell put it:

> The thought is old and oft exprest
> 'Tis his at last who says it best.
> I 'll try my fortune with the rest.

Maeterlinck was well named "the Belgian Shakspere." His first play, "La Princesse Maleine," was full of Shaksperean echoes. His "Monna Vanna" was inspired by Browning's "Luria," as Professor Phelps discovered,[4] and as the author willingly acknowledged. He took parts of his "Mary Magdalene" from Paul Heyse's play of the same name.

To trace out the sources of Shakspere's plots and personalities has afforded occupation and given doctorates to innumerable students in English. As many more could find employment and gain degrees by finding out how many modern novelists and playwrights have borrowed from Shakspere. It is futile to pursue such

[4] "Essays on Modern Dramatists," p. 183.

research to obtain proof of plagiarism or to support claims of priority, but these studies are of interest to the writer for they show where authors get their material, why they choose what they do, and what use they make of it.

There are certain plots or situations which have been used by successive generations of romancers for twenty-five hundred years. The Greek legends still inspire our poets. "The Story of Two Brothers," first known to us in an Egyptian manuscript more than three thousand years old, has been traced through the literature of a dozen different countries from India to France.[5] One incident of it appears in Genesis, Chap. XXXIX, v. 6-20.

It is not for laziness that authors follow the old lines. Nor is it, as is often said, because it is impossible to invent new plots. Any of us can invent new plots. The trouble with them is that they will not work so well as the old ones. The oldest plot you can find in literature is the surest to make a hit with the newest magazine —if it is disguised in fresh clothes. If I were a motion-picture producer I would set my scenario writers to searching the classics for new material. For instance, "The Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon," as told by Achilles Tatius of Alexandria, ought to make a hit on the screen. It is one long chase by land and sea with hair's-breadth escapes at the end of each reel—I mean, book. Twice the heroine is killed and cut to pieces in sight of her pursuing lover, yet in the end they are

[5] See "Les Contes populaires de l'Egypte ancienne," by Maspero.

happily married, and no magic about it either—all mysteries explained to the satisfaction of the most skeptical mind.

The creative faculty, I suppose, exists in all of us to some degree. But it is suppressed at an early age in most of us and emerges later, if at all, with difficulty. As Saint-Beuve puts it: "There is in most men a poet who died young and whom the man survives."[6] The chief difference between the practised writer and the amateur is that the former has overcome the initiatory inhibition and is able to start off as soon as he sits down at his typewriter. The latter stands shivering on the shore, dreading the plunge. He is afraid to let himself think.

It may be a trivial accidental thing that starts a man's mind to working, a chance phrase, a newspaper headline, one of these Personals, a name in a directory or on a signboard, a fragment of a forgotten dream, a figure on the wallpaper, a blot on the desk. Such an instigator the chemist calls a "catalyst." A kettle may be full of inert chemicals, cold and still. He drops in a minute crystal or a bit of spongy metal and the whole mass boils up and something new comes into being. It acts like a spark to a barrel of gunpowder. It sets free suppressed energy.

The character of the stimulus depends of course upon the person. Some imaginations are set off by visual suggestion, some by auditory, some by smells. Valèry Larbaud gets inspiration for his stories from playing with

[6] Il existe dans la plupart des hommes un poète mort jeune à qui l'homme survit.

the little pewter figures made by Ernst Heinrichsen of Nürnberg. Their costumes and chance attitudes on his desk suggest to him characters and adventures. Another French author, Ponson du Terrail, uses paper puppets in working out the plots of his numerous novels of adventure, taking the precaution to lay them down when they are dead to prevent their reappearing later in the story, as has happened with some of our own writers of this sort of fiction. Massenet composed his opera on the Alexandrian Thais while watching the manœuvers of his pet cat. Ibsen got inspiration for his satiric dramas by watching a scorpion sting himself in fury.

A successful New York editor of a group of fiction magazines has employed an imagination test very similar to ours in weeding out the unpromising from the swarm of would-be writers who besieged his office. He writes a name on a card, say, "Mary Jane," and passes it across the desk to the applicant. He then puts to him a rapid-fire series of questions. "What is the color of her hair?" "How is she dressed?" "Where does she live?" "What is her father's occupation?" "What is her chief desire in life?" If the literary aspirant has no notion of any of these things the editor regards him as not worth trying to train into a story-writer.

People vary widely in their susceptibility to the suggestion of names, but doubtless everyone is unconsciously influenced by personal associations, traditional connotation, or the subtle insinuation of the sound. An appropriate name for the hero or heroine, especially if it is also to serve as the title, will contribute much to the success or failure of a novel. It would be an inter-

esting task for some psychologist to work out the causes of our sense of appropriateness of the names of persons and of animals. Charles D. Stewart in his "Partners of Providence" tells how fourteen-year-old *Sam Daly* was set ashore at New Orleans with only sixty cents between him and starvation. He spent thirty cents for a pet alligator to keep him company, but could not think up a name for him. So he called him "George," which was, as he said, "the best I could do . . . as I did n't know no alligator names. It 's mighty hard to name an alligator, because they don't take after anything."

Samuel Butler of Erewhon found it hard to name even more familiar pets, for he says in his "Notebook":

> They say the test of literary power is whether a man can write an inscription. I say, "Can he name a kitten?" And by this test I am condemned, for I cannot.

Try suggesting to a child a name for her doll and you will find that she has already very definite ideas of what is suitable.

I once asked a friend of mine who was a prolific writer of stories and drove a dozen pseudonyms abreast if he was ever at a loss for an idea. He said, "Sometimes, but not for long," and he told me that once when he sat down at his typewriter he could not think of a thing. As he gazed idly out of the window his eye was caught by the glint of a gilded dome, and he wondered if it were real gold. If so it must be thicker than gold leaf or it would soon tarnish. But on the other hand if the plates are thick they might be stolen. But how could they be, in sight of the whole city? Here was a problem and therefore a plot. So he wrote his story about how

such a theft was accomplished and how it was discovered. In a fertile mind the germ of an idea expands and grows spontaneously.

To find out how a rapid-fire fictionist gets his plots and personalities I wrote to George Allan England to explain his methods, which he did with great frankness in "The Independent" of March 27, 1913, as the following shows:

"Bob Davis, editor of Munsey's magazines, put the scenario idea into my head. That is, the concept of working on approved orders, along a definite plot already agreed on between publisher and author. True, I still 'free-lance,' but only as a by-product.

"The scenarios, then, came to take a definite place alongside the note-books and the clippings. On this tripodal arrangement, plus an avid observance of human life and nature and a habit of pounding the typewriter-keys many hours each day, Sundays included, rests the ever-growing work of my fiction-shop.

"My eye is ever open, also my ear, for every bit of good material coming my way. Into the note-book goes now a bit of scenery, a face, a phrase, again some new idea, a plot-germ, an odd garment, a deformity, a beauty. For example I open the book at random and read:

"Aug. 21, '12.—Man on boat, dark Dago, hair gray, brushed back; eyes slant up, heavy lids; thick, up-curved lips, mustache waxed up, goatee, swarthy, handsome, looks like Pan.

"(He'll be the villain in some still-unwritten tale.)

"Sept. 1. Sea-view.—Dappled white and slate clouds, breeze, sun in dazzling shine, beach wet, black, green,

shiny; seaweed smells. Weed, lank and wet. Haze over beach. Big surf makes lather. Sea very pale green, running to white at top of wave. Thunder of surf, mist of spray, wind from surf in face.

"(This will form part of the scene of reconciliation between M. and N. at some future date.)

"Gormin'. Any God 's a mint of things to tell ye. Swell up on your leavin's. Make long arms. All puckered up to a goolthrite. Double up the prunes! All of a high to go. He ain't goin' to stan' it a gret sight longer. Jillpoke. Hotter 'n a skunk. Fatter 'n a settled minister, etc., etc.

"(Local color stuff, Maine dialect.)

"So much for the minutiæ. My books contain a world of every kind of 'property,' like that at the stage-director's hand. No situation can arise where I can not find a character, scenery and dialect to fit the case. Now for the plots.

"'Where do you get your stories?'"

"Everywhere! The writer who is alive can pick up stories right from the air. On trains and boats, from the newspapers, from the living speech of humans, from a thousand and one sources, good fiction can be culled. All you have to do is to watch for it—and grab it. And after years of work, the watching becomes second nature; you can't help it. Writers are just big tom-cats stalking plot-rats through the attics and cellars of life, or sitting at incident-holes, waiting for the story-mice to pop out. It 's so easy! Sometimes a chance bit of conversation will detonate a whole story or series of stories. About two years ago I took a morning walk with a friend. We got to speculating on what would

happen if all the people in the world were killed save two. From this germ has grown a trilogy of serials.

"I don't believe in driving the machinery too hard and running a risk of wearing it out. After it has turned out three thousand words for me, I shut the shop for the day and go for a walk, a skate, or a run in my auto, which was bought with part of the proceeds of a single story. About once in two years I go to Europe, picking up still more books full of data, people, and plots. I find these trips pay about 200 per cent. dividends, in cash."

For the benefit of those who may think that a writer of popular fiction must be a "low-brow" and lacking in literary training I may mention that Mr. England is an M.A. of Harvard and took the Bowdoin prize for a study of the influence of Petrarch on Elizabethan sonnet-sequences.

All writers who write on the art of fiction urge the need of getting material from life. Says Walter Besant in "The Art of Fiction":

> The materials for the novelist, in short, are not in the books upon the shelves, but in the men and women he meets with everywhere; he will find them, where Dickens found them, in the crowded streets, in trains, tramcars and omnibuses, at the shop-windows, in churches and chapels. . . . Humanity is like a kaleidoscope, which you may turn about and look into, but you will never get the same picture twice—it can not be exhausted. But it may be objected that the broad distinctive types have been long since all used. They *have been used*, but the comfort is that they can never be used

up, and that they may constantly be used again and again.

Are there to be no more hypocrites because we have had *Tartuffe* and *Pecksniff*? Do you suppose that the old miser, the young spendthrift, the gambler, the adventurer, the coquette, the drunkard, the soldier of fortune, are never to reappear, because they have been handled already?

I am quite sure that most men never see anything at all. . . . Yet it is very easy to shake people and make them open their eyes. Some of us remember, for instance, the time when Kingsley astonished everybody with his descriptions of the wonders to be seen on the seashore and to be fished out of every pond in the field. Then all the world began to poke about the seaweed and to catch tritons and keep water-grubs in little tanks. . . . At present the lesson which we need is not that the world is full of the most strange and wonderful creatures, all eating each other perpetually, but that the world is full of the most wonderful men and women, not one of whom is mean or common, but to each his own personality is a great and awful thing, worthy of the most serious study.

Henry James also stresses the type of mind necessary for the writer who would put to use his experiences:

When the mind is imaginative—much more when it happens to be that of a genius—it takes to itself the faintest hints of life, it converts the very pulses of the air into revelations. The young lady living in a village has only to be a damsel upon whom nothing is lost to make it quite unfair (as it seems to me) to declare to her that she shall have nothing to say about the military. . . . I remember an English novelist, a woman of genius, telling me that she was much commended for the impression she had managed to give in one of her tales

of the nature and way of life of the French Protestant youth. She had been asked where she learned so much about this recondite being; she had been congratulated on her peculiar opportunities. These opportunities consisted in her having once, in Paris, as she ascended a staircase, passed an open door where, in the household of a *pasteur,* some of the young Protestants were seated at table round a finished meal. The glimpse made a picture; it lasted only a moment, but that moment was an experience. She had got her impression, and she evolved her type. . . . She was blessed with the faculty which when you give it an inch takes an ell, and which for the artist is a much greater source of strength than any incident of residence or place in the social scale.

I formerly supposed—and even said in print[7]—that G. K. Chesterton composed his detective-stories as though he was playing jackstraws, by getting things in the worst possible tangle and then amusing himself as well as the reader by inventing a way out of the apparently impossible inextricable situation. But in a recent magazine article[8] entitled "An Admiral Eats His Hat" Chesterton explains "how to write detective-stories." The rules he gives are interesting as showing his way if not the only way of plot construction:

The point is that the explanations should come in an ascending series, each of them telling something and only the last telling everything; but above all telling the important thing. There is here a sort of rule that might really in some sense be explained like a grammatical or mathematical rule. Let the young murderer in fancy, and mystifier in fact, make up his mind first what is the

[7] "Six Major Prophets," p. 144.
[8] "Hearst's Magazine," November, 1921.

real central revelation of his story, and then break it up into lesser and larger parts, so to speak, putting the lesser at the beginning, and keep the largest to the last. But even the smallest revelation must reveal something and thus increase the desire to know everything.

It is one of the first principles of this cheap constructive science that no new figure must appear at the end of the story, merely in order to end it, or even to explain it. The most necessary and most neglected of all rules is this: that the detective story is centripetal and not centrifugal. If the terms be too technical, I would say that crime is domestic and not nomadic. Or again, on the supposition that this educational course of mine includes infants of earliest ages, I would say that criminality like charity should begin at home, and, what is even more important, should end at home.

The thrill of revelation in a really good mystery always consists in finding the goods on some familiar person inside the house; that is, some already accepted figure inside a certain admitted delimitation, and as near as possible to the center of it. In the best cases he is actually in the center of it. Perhaps the finest climax in all criminal fiction is that in "Moonstone" in which the investigator, after searching patiently and in perfect good faith, find that he himself is the criminal.

If the secret involves a villain, let the villain not be hid in an outhouse, so to speak, but in the very heart of the household—a very viper on the hearth. Then, having decided what is really to be concealed, set about at once to reveal it; that is, to decide by what segments and in what proportions it is to be revealed. Decide that at such and such a stage you can afford to divulge such and such a feature of the real facts, and then another and larger feature, and so on. For it should always be marching towards the light. Which reminds me of another fashionable phrase, very common in

journalistic eulogies; not uncommon in chapter headings; I mean, "The plot thickens."

Remember, on your immortal salvation, that the plot ought *never* to thicken. The clouds ought to be thinning all the time. But they ought to be the clouds of a thunderstorm, and the light come first in the form of lightning.

Robert Louis Stevenson in "A Humble Remonstrance" says:

Our art is occupied, and is bound to be occupied, not so much in making stories true as in making them typical; not so much in capturing the lineaments of each fact, as in marshaling all of them towards a common end; for the welter of impressions, all forcible but all discreet, which life presents, it substitutes a certain artificial series of impressions, all indeed most feebly represented, but all aiming at the same effect, all eloquent of the same idea, all chiming together like consonant notes in music or like the graduated tints in a good picture. Life is monstrous, illogical, abrupt, and poignant; a work of art, in comparison, is neat, finite, self-contained, rational flowing and emasculate. The life of man is not the subject of novels but the inexhaustible store from which subjects are to be selected.

What the author enjoys is the free exercise of his creative imagination, constructing a complete and consistent edifice out of such fragments as he has chanced to find. What the reader enjoys is the same thing, using for his edifice such material as the author gives him supplemented by what he has in his own storehouse. As the author's mind works best when it has given to it enough and not too much primary material and just the

sort that is most suggestive, so the reader does not want the whole story given to him but merely the sketch which he can fill in with detail and decoration to suit his taste. The author shows his skill in supplying only the indispensable, in knowing just how much and what can be left to the reader's imagination. In describing a room or a face the author does not make out an inventory of all its furniture or features but specifies only those salient characteristics which will enable the reader to reconstruct an apartment or personality sufficiently like the author's original conception as to serve the purpose.

The less information the novelist gives us the better so long as it is enough. A story is interesting in proportion as the imagination of the reader is made to do the constructive work. A good story is like the outline pictures that were given to us when we were children to color from our paint-box. The author can only sketch the picture he would have us see; we must give it color and three dimensions and movements from our own memories and imagination. If the author fails to supply enough material for us to work on the story is flat and meaningless to us. An allusion that is not caught is as annoying as a muffed ball. If the author tells us too much there is nothing left for us to do and the story sounds trite and unprofitable. That is why the story that thrills one person is a bore to another. It misses him on one side or the other.

The more practised the reader the fewer hints the author has to give him. This is particularly apparent in the drama. The habitual theater-goer instinctively knows when he sees an actor toying with a savage looking

paper-knife in the first act that somebody is going to be stabbed with it in the third act; so he lays up the weapon in his subconscious mind until it shall be needed for its fatal purpose. But the inexperienced theater-goer is startled by the catastrophe and wonders where the weapon came from. Those who attend the motion-pictures constantly become marvelously skilled in the interpretation of pantomime. They catch instantly the significance of a gesture, a change of expression or a flash-back, while those of us who see the movies only occasionally miss the point and lag behind the crowd. Legends are less and less needed as the audiences become educated. The musical connoisseur detests the explanatory program. Progress in literature is therefore toward simplicity by the elimination of details that have become unessential and hence an embarrassment to the reader.

We unconsciously fill in all necessary details in a description as our eyes fill up the blank space covered by the blind spot in our retina. The bottom half of a line of type may be cut off but we read the line without difficulty. If a letter or even a word has been left out of a sentence we supply the omission mentally without observing it unless we are proof-readers—and sometimes they do too. A skilful artist may leave out a finger or two, even an eye, without causing us any annoyance. A Japanese artist with a few strokes of the brush will give us a picture—or rather incite our imaginations to paint one on the almost bare paper. So too the author may reduce his descriptions of scenery and personal appearance to a few brief hints, provided he selects the most important. Kipling is a master hand at this; so

was Poe. "The Pit and the Pendulum" is one of the most vivid stories in the language, yet how little we are told of the environment and circumstances! A good test of your pictorial imagination is whether you can read a play with any enjoyment. Are the stage-directions sufficient to give you a picture of the scene and characters or do you have to see the play or have the setting described as a novelist does it?

But because the author thinks best to cut down description to the lowest point, do not assume that he sees no more than he gives. No, be sure he has the complete picture before his mind's eye in more detail than you can see in it. So having the entire scene before him he can pick out just those particular points that will best serve to carry the impression of the whole over to the reader. If it is a room that he must convey he may know enough about the furniture to make out an auctioneer's inventory, but on sorting it over he finds that a base-burner, a Brussels carpet, a steel engraving and a black walnut what-not are sufficient to differentiate this parlor in period and place from a sixth-floor apartment in Riverside Drive. If the reader is familiar with such a room he can tell in three guesses what the picture is and can name four of the objects on the what-not. But if the story is translated into French the reader will know nothing but what the author tells him and will therefore find the story singularly bare and unconvincing. What we get out of a book depends upon what we bring to it.

I have said that a novelist must know much about the scenes he describes although he may say very little. In

order to secure the necessary subordination of details it is often desirable to remove a little in time or space from the immediate scene in order to grasp its salient features as a whole and so describe them more vividly than can be done in their presence. Clayton Hamilton in "On the Trail of Stevenson" points out the interesting fact that "throughout his lifelong wanderings, Stevenson rarely or never attempted to describe a place so long as he was in it." He wrote about Scotland when he was in France, America, and Samoa. He wrote about Germany in England, about California in France, and about Paris on a transatlantic steamer. And he explained why he adopted this curious custom in the essay on "Cockermouth and Keswick":

Very much as a painter half-closes his eyes so that some salient unity may disengage itself from among the crowd of details, and what he sees may thus form itself into a whole; very much on the same principle, I may say, I allow a considerable lapse of time to intervene between any of my little journeyings and the attempt to chronicle them. I can not describe a thing that is before me at the moment, or that has been before me only a very little while before; I must allow my recollections to get thoroughly strained free from all chaff till nothing be except the pure gold[*]; allow my memory to choose out what is truly memorable by a process of natural selection; and I piously believe that in this way I insure the survival of the fittest. If I make notes for future use, or if I am obliged to write letters during the course of my little excursion, I so interfere with the process that

[*] If this sentence were in a freshman theme it would be marked by the professor of English as a triple mixed metaphor, but Stevenson carries it off with *æs triplex*.

I can never again find out what is worthy of being preserved, or what should be given in full length, what in torso, or what merely in profile.

This is sound psychology in the main, but unless the writer is sure he is as great a genius as Stevenson he had better not take it literally and be too hasty in discarding his note-book. He must remember that R. L. S. had a remarkably well-trained or talented set of "brownies" in his unconscious who could be relied upon to sort over his memories and even to supply him with original ideas. It was they, he says, who gave him the plots of "Olalla" and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

E. E. S.

CHAPTER IX

THE PROBLEM OF THE PLOT

A plot is a problem. A physical problem in the cruder forms of fiction such as how to get your hands free, when you are bound to the railroad track, before the express comes by. A mental problem in the modern business-story where you must find a way to put your stores on the map and beat your competitor over the way, or in the detective-story where you have to puzzle out whose foot made the bloody tracks. A moral problem in the "problem-play" where you are called upon to decide whether you should tell a lie to save an enemy from a merited punishment or whether a woman's first duty is toward herself or her family. Always a problem, a dilemma, a forked path.

For only when confronted with a problem is consciousness sufficiently aroused to take an interest. Only when a choice is to be made is the cerebral cortex lit up by the electric current. Under ordinary circumstances the train of thought runs smoothly along the permanent way on its habitual track, but when there is an obstruction or an open switch then signal-lights are displayed that the engineer must be on his guard. The conscious ego, like the weary Napoleon, leaves an order with the sentry at the tent door that he is not to be disturbed by

any news of victory but instantly awakened if there is danger and something to be done.

We are only interested in what we are concerned in, personally or by proxy. The spectator is bored by the base-ball game unless he holds his breath as the batter strikes and his muscles grow tense as the runner struggles to make a home run. It is only when the spectator takes sides at the game that he is able to enjoy it fully. If he is of a mercenary mind and only moved by the prospects of financial loss or gain he has to bet on the game to get up any interest in its outcome.

So in literature. The reader's emotional interest is not engaged unless he identifies himself in some measure with one of the characters or, as in the best literature, with each in turn. "Put Yourself in His Place" is the caption of one novel but the secret of all. You must feel yourself in the fleeing criminal or the pursuing detective. Especially do you take the rôle of hero or heroine. You yourself are misunderstood and persecuted and you yourself are in the end vindicated and triumphant. "Cinderella" or "Jack the Giant-Killer" are in some of their protean forms the favorite romances of all the seven ages.

The motion-picture dramas, having been born free from the literary tradition and not yet subjected to literary criticism, reveal the popular psychology more frankly than do books or stage plays. A novel that sells fifty thousand copies is regarded as a success but a film play that does not please five million is a failure. The silvered screen is therefore really a big mirror that reflects in visible form the average opinions, tastes, and

prejudices of the audience in front of it. Here then the demand for the happy ending, the conventional standards, and characters with which one identifies oneself becomes imperative. The adaptation of classic stories to the screen leads to amusing results sometimes. Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" in anything like its original form would not satisfy the masses even if it could get past the censors. So in the film version the minister had to marry the girl and they went away to England where they lived happily ever after. The story of Jephthah's daughter is so shocking to the modern taste that in the motion-pictures the daughter, while she is mourning with her maidens upon the mountain, is carried off by a highland chief and has no need for further lamentation. Other motion picture men claim credit for refining the crude morals of the Bible. In reply to pious protests against the irreverence of the portrayal of the sacred character of Solomon on the film the producers of "The Queen of Sheba" replied that on the contrary "we have taken the liberty of softening the impression conveyed in the Bible where Solomon is portrayed as a polygamist." Burns might approve "the wisest man the warl' e'er saw" because "he dearly lo'ed the lassies O" but the producer and the public would not stand for it. In this week's "Saturday Evening Post" I find confirmation of my point in a story, "Peter Passes," by Christine Jope Slade, where the shop-girl says:

I told him why working girls loved Mary Pickford so —because she dressed worse than us and had a rottener

time, and it always came out right in the end. It 's all that keeps us going; the belief that there is something better waiting if we can only catch up with it.

This is the secret of the persistent popular demand for a happy ending. The reader has a personal interest in the outcome. A novel in which there is no character sufficiently admirable that we can identify ourselves with it is not pleasing to an unperverted taste. A prolonged course of novel reading may, however, transfer the sympathy of the reader from the characters to the author. He will then get his enjoyment not from the story but from the way it is told. Just so the inveterate theater-goer will take pleasure in destroying the illusion of reality that the playwright, actors, and producer have striven to establish. Instead of sympathizing with the weeping heroine he will admire or criticize the skill of the actress in dabbing glycerine on her cheeks. So, too, the concert-goer may become quite deaf to the message of the music through absorption in the manner of the bowing of the violinist or the breathing of the vocalist. Because of this tendency to shift from appreciation of the substance to study of the technic, editors find it necessary frequently to change their dramatic, musical, and fictional critics and employ others who have not lost the innocence of the eye and can still look upon the play, opera, or book as the un-ennuied public sees it.

The place for the spectator is in the audience, not behind the scenes. The ordinary reader is not concerned with technics but with their result. So he can not lose himself in admiration of the author's English or archi-

tectural skill if all the characters depicted are so unpleasant or impossible that he can not imagine himself as playing their rôles. He must sympathize (literally "feel-with") with some of them at least or else he can not empathize with them (literally "feel himself one of them").

An author's success therefore depends upon his sympathetic power, upon his ability to actuate his fictitious characters with his own vitality, to transfuse his own life-blood into their inanimate forms; in short, to accomplish the miracle of creation as was done by Pygmalion with his Galatea, Frankenstein with his monster, Friar Bacon with his brazen android, Vergil with his statue, and Rabbi Löw of Prague with his Golem.

We can often discern the extent of the author's sympathies by the vitality of his characters. Sometimes a novel contains only one person which strikes the reader as real, which has been worked out from the inside as a good architect designs a building. Such a book is an autobiography disguised as fiction. In the ordinary novel there may be two or three characters that are convincing, the rest are mere lay figures, wooden in appearance and action, only painted canvas on a lath framework. The author has not taken the trouble or had the power to get inside them or even behind them and work them out in three dimensions, so they stand flat as part of the scenery. Sometimes an author's sympathies are limited by his prejudices to a particular class, sect, or nationality. Sometimes they are sex-linked and the author shows insight only in depicting male or female characters. But a novelist like Dickens or Balzac takes a *personal*

interest in every personality in his pages, whether they be good or bad, rich or poor, refined or vulgar. The casual waitress and the stranger who passes on the street are as much alive as the main personages. The eye of such a novelist is a lens with universal focus.

> In the elder days of art
> Builders wrought with greatest care
> Each minute and unseen part,
> For the gods see everywhere.
>
> —LONGFELLOW.

If the author is not interested in his characters he can not expect his readers to be. Their minds follow his. Their curiosity should traverse the same track that his curiosity struck out. "Given such characters in such a situation, what would happen?" is the question that the author asked himself, and the reader, arrived at the same point in the development of the plot, subconsciously asks the same question and then turns over the page to see if the author has answered it according to his satisfaction. If not, he takes to another author.

Answering the question according to the reader's "satisfaction" does not mean that the author must supply the same solution as the reader has divined. Only in the lowest type of fiction can the reader foresee the end and this sort soon palls on any but mediocre minds. If the author can not provide a more ingenious dénouement than the reader, the latter has no reason for reading. He may sit in his easy chair and imagine his own romances without buying a book.

"Keep 'em guessing" is the secret of a successful

novelist or playwright. But he must play fair. The man who propounds a conundrum and, after every one in the room has guessed at it or given it up, calmly confesses that it has no answer is speedily made to feel the displeasure of the entire company. If the amateur sleight-of-hand performer ties the hands of two people together with a complicated knot and tells them to disengage themselves without touching the string, it is not felt as a satisfactory solution if, when they have tried all possible twists and turns, he whips out his pocket-knife and cuts the cord.

So, too, in romance writing it is not felt as a fair dénouement to cut the Gordian knot. The author is limited by the unformulated rules of the game to such endings as strike the reader as logical and proper. To take for instance the simplest form of the problem plot, the detective-story, the author may prove that the old man was killed by his favorite niece if a satisfactory psychological motive can be adduced for such an act. But the reader would rightly resent it as unfair if after his suspicions had been pointed in turn to the butler, the cook, the cook's followers, the tramp in the barn, the disinherited son, and the jealous wife and each had been proved innocent the author should explain that the fatal shot was really fired by a passing stranger—not previously introduced to the reader—who was trying out his rifle on a crow in a neighboring field. That is quite as probable a happening in real life as assassination by a loving niece, but it is not the proper answer to the reader's riddle. It is as bad as slipping in an extra x, an unknown quantity, in the course of solving a mathe-

matical problem. A golf-player has a right to complain if he finds that a long straight drive has landed him in a cup hazard, placed there to penalize the good player.

Some novelists after they have got everything in the worst possible muddle get out of it by killing off the key character by accident or disease. This is a cheap and nasty way of bringing the story to an end and not what the reader has a right to expect, although such things do happen in real life. Life is illogical, but fiction, being the offspring of the logical mind of man, can not exercise the same freedom of irrationality without belying its parentage.

When a musician sits down on a piano-stool to compose, all the keys are spread before him in equal rank. He can play any one he pleases. He can shut his eyes and stick out his forefinger and touch any key. But after that note has been sounded, whether by choice or chance, the situation is not the same. The next note, whichever it may be, bears some relation to the first, stands in simple arithmetical ratio to it. The third note is not free, but bound to the other two, and by the time the musician has struck the fourth note he has fixed the key and the chord. He has predetermined the tone with which the piece must close if it is to satisfy the sense of the auditor.

The sounds are not extinguished as the wires cease vibrating but linger long in the mental ear and the later notes must be such as will combine the earlier in a satisfactory sequence. Our past limits and directs our future. The continuity of consciousness gives consistency to our conduct. The only "free thinker" is the

amnesic idiot, whose mind is each morning wiped clear of all previous impressions. On a *tabula rasa* one may write anything, but a palimpsest is never the same as pure parchment.

When the author sits down before a blank sheet of paper he can write whatever he likes. Plots and personalities are alike undetermined. But as soon as he has set down the title he has struck his keynote and as his characters begin to take form under his touch and assume lifelike proportions they become more intractable and self-willed. Though he made them he can not manage them. They are his creatures, yet they rush on to their predestined fate in spite of him. If he heads them off by force and attempts to drive them in some other direction they fall dead at his touch. In so far as he has made them lifelike he has endowed them, with a life and logic of their own and toward the end of the novel the author feels himself more a spectator than an inventor. He describes rather than directs what shall happen.

In all the great dramas from Æschylus to Ibsen this sense of fatality is dominant. A poor writer may do whatever he pleases with his puppets for they are not real to him—or to any one else. His fictitious world is a chance world where anything may happen, where the logic of character and circumstance has no control over action, where the end is not involved in the beginning. His mind is unable to follow the link in the chain of causality and he sinks toward the level of the amnesic idiot.

In real life only omniscience can follow all the links and discern all the causes, so preordination must remain

the prerogative of divinity. We know in part and therefore we can prophesy only in part. In the world of the imagination, which is our own creation, we have more foreknowledge and therefore more power. There are, or appear to be, many possible solutions to the same problem, various plausible endings to the same romance. The refusal of an author to make any alterations in his first conceptions may be due to prideful obstinacy rather than to conscientious consistency. The best authors have sometimes consented to radical changes in terminations. Wells altered the ending of "When the Sleeper Wakes" in the second edition. We must avoid the common mistake of taking the fiction we read too seriously, of accepting it blindly as a correct picture of real life.

Something more than three thousand new novels are published in the English language each year. As for the serials and short-stories that fill the magazines and newspapers but do not attain the honor of cloth covers, no one would venture to compute their number, still less how many persons read them and how much time they spend at it. It would indeed be a profitless speculation, for the fundamental question is how many people believe the fiction they read *and how much they believe it.* Advertisements nowadays are keyed and we can tell exactly what influence they exert, but there is no way of telling what is the effect of a romance. It must have some effect on every reader and on some a good deal. One must in the reading of it give it a certain speciousness of credence, otherwise we take no interest, and, having for a time surrendered ourselves to its pretensions, it is not supposable that we erase all trace of it

from the mind when we turn the last page. Fiction is designed expressly to deceive us by its semblance to life, and it does somewhat deceive even the most skeptical of us.

In so far as we are induced to accept it subconsciously at its face value we are deceived by it. For fiction is always fictitious and much of it is also misleading as a guide to life. We have got past the age when we were misled into longing to be cow-boys or pirates; we have long outgrown our faith in Cooper's Indians, "an extinct race that never existed" as Mark Twain calls them. But no doubt we do much more foolish things nowadays through unwitting imitation of the people in books. Shaw says that "ten years of cheap reading have changed the English from the most stolid nation in Europe to the most theatrical and hysterical." What their conduct would be if they had devoted the decade to Shaw's novels and plays we do not like to imagine.

All art necessarily consists in falsification. The artist must select, eliminate, distort, rearrange, reduce, and exaggerate in order to produce his desired effect. "There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion," says Bacon. But this prevarication does no harm except in print, for literature alone of all the arts has any considerable influence on conduct. A Gothic cathedral is exaggerated as to height, but the tourists who admire it do not thereby add a cubit to their stature. Music consists of exaggerated and artificial sound, but after hearing an opera the men do not talk like Fafnir and the women do not yodel like a valkyr—or if they do they are soon cured of it. It

would not do our young men any harm to try to look more like the Apollo Belvidere, and as for the young women, we all know of some who would be decidedly improved by imitation of the Venus of Milo.

But with novels and dramas it is different, for here life is presented and conduct portrayed. It is, however, impossible to present life in its entirety and to portray conduct correctly. Even if the author knew the truth and wished to tell it he could not. Most novelists, however, do not know any more than any other people about what life is, and they often know less about what it ought to be. They may seem to be masters of psychology and profess to have a profound knowledge of human nature, so as to be able to foretell the actions and destiny of any set of characters they have introduced, but editors and literary executors know how thin the pretense. The logical ending, the inevitable outcome, is it not reached after the result of much perplexity and many trials, in which the taste of the proposed publisher and the desires of the hoped-for readers are influential factors? Did not Kipling, sure craftsman as he is, provide alternative endings to "The Light That Failed"? Was not Ibsen, the dramatist of inexorable destiny, willing to sacrifice Nora's final door-slam in order to get "The Doll's House" upon the stage? Imagine an astronomer sending in the following statement:

There will be a transit of Venus across the sun's disk from right to left on April 29, 1913, at 4:35:2 P. M.

Then, after a little further deliberation, adding these lines at the bottom of the page:

Note to the editor of the "Ephemeris": If you think that will not suit the public, make it "left to right" or "A. M." instead of "P. M."

"The logical ending" is most to be distrusted, for life is not logical. The climax at the end of the play or novel is most unreal, for in real life it would be followed by an anticlimax, since there is no curtain or back cover to cut off the story at the most dramatic point. A truthful novel would read more like Pepys's diary than like a romance, for the diary has neither beginning nor end, plot nor system, and it tells of a real man who, unlike the heroes of fiction, went to sleep at night and woke up in the morning and ate three times a day and took things as they came, business and pleasure, great things and small, actions and emotions, as do all of us.

Truth is stranger than fiction, they tell us when we object to some of the inventions of the romancers. Very likely, but we are not talking of probability but of actuality. This is the fault of the fictionist, that his story is plausible but real life is not. His imagination is limited, real life is not. The experienced novel-reader can guess the ending nine times out of ten when he is half-way through the book, but he can not guess how his own life is going to turn out.

Fiction began in fairy-tales, and it has never got beyond that stage. It was never less reliable than now when it makes most pretension to veritism. The absurd codes of honor, the erratic ethics, the impossible actions, the incredible transformations of character, the inexplicable misunderstandings, that make up the novel of

to-day should prevent it from being taken seriously. Certainly anybody who attempted to behave as people do in the novel world would get into no end of trouble and deserve to. Perhaps this flood of fiction is the cause of much that is hard to understand and still harder to forgive in the conduct of our contemporaries. Those who live in a dream world are mere somnambulists in this.

E. E. S.

CHAPTER X

CHARACTER-CREATION

A trinity of gifts contributes to literary genius: first, the gift of *style,* power to evoke vision and emotion through verbal magic; second, the gift of *plot,* to weave together fragments of life into an amazing adventure wherein incident follows incident with incomparable logic of chance; third, the gift of *character-creation,* power to confer the miracle of life upon phantom children of the mind.

And what darling flesh-and-blood phantoms some of them are! *Mr. Micawber* whom Dickens himself was wont to avoid when in a hurry! *Sir Roger de Coverley* hunting for the proper tenor note in his chorus of baying hounds! *Viola* of "Twelfth Night"!

Who would deny them a reality much more convincing than that of our conventional neighbor across the street who is at best an animated automaton, wound up matutinally by his wife—or by the alarm-clock—and put daily through his limited number of tricks.

Of the three gifts, plot-making, style, and character-creation, the last would seem to lie closest to the heart of life; it is most deeply rooted in the soil of instinct. Skill in plot-making comes with practice, with a workmanlike way of recording and weaving together curious

bits of information that have been washed ashore by our own experiences or those of our friends. Style also comes somewhat by art; by saturation of oneself with the productions of the great craftsmen; by the ready manipulation of idea and pen. But power to create men and women who walk through the world and dominate its moods and color its literary gossip, whose motives stimulate speculation as keen as that we bestow upon relatives, whose lives and deaths epitomize varied philosophies—well, no correspondence-school that teaches short-story writing in two score lessons has yet learned the secret of such creative vitality.

And yet character-creation is not something deeply cryptic, the inalienable prerogative of novelist and of playwright. All of us create characters as a matter of self-preservation, for what you think your neighbor is like is *your cue* as to the proper way to treat him.

Note how you shift facial expression and posture as you change your conversational focus from Mr. A to Mrs. X. With the first you slouch, are slangy, in mental dishabille; with the second you mind your p's and q's, are keenly conscious both of unpolished shoes and unpolished grammar. How variously too we sign ourselves; now we are "yours most indifferently" and now "yours to the end."

Every one indulges in character-creation when he falls in love with the most fascinating, absolutely unique personality in the world. Alas, when this creation of genius is draped upon a lay figure!

Practical success is pretty largely determined by the vitality with which one creates characters and the size of

one's repertory. The real problem of democracy is akin to that of the novelist, namely, the dramatic conception of the greatest possible number of personalities. The secret of most social conflicts is lack of power to create character.

To the inflexible mind, men and women are but trees walking, wooden figures to be shoved about like puppets. The only cues available for the totally unimaginative are clothes—a coronet or silk hat—or professional or religious tags. They can not recognize goodness under a non-union label.

Democracy depends upon multiplicity of character-creations. Morality consists pretty largely in the consistency with which you are able to fashion one—your own. Many never succeed in conceiving even a self-pattern; to the end they remain a bundle of unreconciled impulses. Others unify their lives with a rigidity of accent that is most disconcerting. There are no half-colors in their world. Like the mountains of the moon their creeds throw very black shadows.

The roots of character-creation lie very deep. Let us brave for a moment the risk involved in all uncovering of roots.

To dogmatize to-day concerning the number and nature of human instincts and emotions is to invite criticism from biologists and psychologists who are engaged in a resurvey of this interesting field. The unrevised Freudian centers every impulse of life in the love-instinct; Adler finds it in the will-to-power, the striving of the ego for superiority. Jung talks of a hypothetical energy of life, which appears at first in simple functions

such as those of nutrition and sex but in time becomes highly differentiated. One finds it convenient for purposes of description to list certain action-patterns that center in the mental and physical functions that tend to preserve (1) the individual, (2) the species, and (3) the group. Self-preservation involves the function of nutrition, the collecting and conservation of food, the provision of shelter, and the defense against aggression. Species-preservation emphasizes mating and the propagation and care of children. Group-preservation emphasizes group-fighting, communication, and all sorts of activities centering in gregariousness.

There are numberless complications of these basal activities. One may build a home for a mate, or for a stretch of painted canvas; the collecting impulse may develop into such delightful hoarding as that made manifest in the collections in a boy's pocket or a magpie's nest or even into the amassing of a fortune after the manner of a Hetty Green or the housing of butterflies in a Museum of Natural History. Play may range from a baby's absorbed interest in a rattle to a poet's fascinated manipulation of riming words. But out of such basal tendencies emerge the manifold patterns of individuality. Varying strength of different impulses and varying combinations of them give us our many varieties of personality.

Your character as conceived by the modern psychologist is partly what *you are* and still more *what you are not*. To explain this apparent paradox let me state that the modern psychologist does not believe that strong impulses linger demurely in the antechamber until

summoned into action. In other words instinct does not wait to be called out by the environment; it is likely to create its own object or to mold its environment into an object. This is to be kept in mind in our survey of certain situations in life analogous to those found in literary work. Remember a mental creation may be a replica of something we have, or of something we have not but wish to have, and that most of our wishes and compensatory fantasies center in the patterns that make for self-preservation, species-preservation, or gregariousness.

There are many situations in life in which we may seek analogies for literary creation of character. Study of them will show how creative human needs are. Let us consider, in particular: (1) The imaginary companions of childhood; (2) the ideal of adolescence; (3) dual personalities.

The imaginary playmate is one of the most charming fantasies of childhood; the delightful whimsy so manifested must not blind us to its real import. Obviously, in many cases, the make-believe companion is to compensate for something that is lacking in the child's surroundings. It gratifies an instinctive prompting; it is the creation by a racial impulse of an object upon which to expend itself. This fact has been recognized in the common notion that the imaginary companion develops in the life of the lonely child and is the outcome of his effort to compensate for his loneliness. This explanation is true so far as it goes but it does n't go far enough. There are many varied impulses so embodied. Sometimes the companion is an ideal for imitation, one of golden tresses or golden motives; sometimes a hunch-

backed, bewhiskered old man of a conscience; sometimes a whipping-boy to take one's punishments; or a most delectable baby to be mothered at will.

Let us inspect a few reports, given me by students.

The first case to be cited is charmingly nonchalant. This imagined character served a very utilitarian purpose. His name was Old-Man-Milk-the-Cow and his creator was only four.

> The only instance I can remember definitely was when poor Old-Man-Milk-the-Cow died and I loaded him on the hay-wagon with a pitchfork and, driving to the top of a sand-hill a few miles away, threw him off in the sand, and came away.

Here is another report in which the companioning element is more evident:

> I can see her now as she used to look, dressed in a black and white checkered apron. I called her Reaken. I don't remember her face because she always wore a sunbonnet. Whenever I think of her I see her golden curls peeping just out from beneath the edge of her bonnet. She came oftenest in the springtime, when the first daisies and buttercups were coming in the meadow. I saw her only once in a great while but I talked to her often.

The imaginary companion may be invoked to give one a feeling of security. One timid little girl had as a companion a woman . . .

> about five feet three inches tall, with large brown eyes and very dark hair. She always dressed in black and wore a white apron and large comb in the back of her

hair. We had a large orchard and a small path ran through it. Whenever I wanted to talk with her she would walk slowly up this path until she was directly in front of me and then she would stop. Whenever I turned to go anywhere she would fall in behind me and walk slowly after me. I was never afraid because I felt this lady would protect me. I hated to start to school because I thought I could n't have my companion with me. For a time I walked a short distance behind my brother so she could walk with me.

Sometimes the imaginary companion is all that one would like to be. "Very tall and beautiful, with golden curls, not fat and freckled as I was."

Sometimes the companion is a little sister, to be mothered at will, sometimes an older sister to take care of one, sometimes a twin brother or sister, a duplicate of oneself.

Sometimes the companion is not a human being. One girl reports:

I have always had a companion. If I am happy it is a bluebird on my shoulder on a bright golden thread that I hold in my hand. If blue and friendless, my companion is a snow-white bird listening to my tale of woe. Sometimes the companion is a beautiful black horse on which I am sure of making my escape. After the death of a black sheep-dog that had companioned me for a number of years, my companion became a black dog indistinct in outline but never leaving me.

Other reports bring still other motives. There is the work-fairy carried in the apron-pocket and summoned out to help in disagreeable tasks; Uncle Sam, the imaginary companion of the little boy of the Indian reserva-

tion; "My folks in Kansas City," imaginary relatives with which to threaten less accommodating members of the family; moving-picture people who have condescended to walk off the screen. Most thrilling of all, a train of cars as a playmate! Think of taking your daily walk followed by a snorting and sportive locomotive!

Not always, however, is the companion visible. It may be a disembodied voice, so to speak, communicated with via the telephone. Thus the impulse for prolonged conversation may find gratification without being blocked by a cold-hearted exchange or a hurried neighbor.

And upon these children of fantasy are bestowed quaint names or realistic ones: Nonnie or Kangaroo, Salt Nellie or Sarah Stay-a-While!

The following account of an imagination-world and imaginary characters, sent me by Dr. Preston Slosson of the University of Michigan, is of especial interest to the psychologist of literature because of the period covered, more than ten years, and the care with which the origin of the names and the development of the ideas is traced. Doubtless many stories and poems have germinated from such childhood creations:

When only four or five years old P. S. had invented an imaginary companion named Mona. Whether the name was a pure product of fantasy or caught by some chance overhearing (there is an island of that name on old maps) he does not know. His brother A. S. had at the same time an imaginary companion named Ingast. In neither case was there an identification of the person with the child himself.

When about six years old P. S. was seized with a passion for astronomy and geography. This led to the defi-

nite localization of Mona. He became a war-chief and life-president of a small tribe of hardy warriors on the planet Saturn. P. S. himself was one of the comrades of Mona, usually the second in command. (It is worth noting, as pointing perhaps to some lack of ambitiousness or aggressiveness on the part of P. S., that even in day-dream worlds he figured always as an important personage but not as *the* ruler or commander. P. S. was always the hero's friend but not the hero himself.) Saturn was a desolate, cold, and barren planet. P. S. drew maps of it in which most of the area was given over to mountains and to icy or granite-covered plain. This was partly the influence of environment (P. S. then living in Wyoming), partly the influence of statements in the astronomy book, and partly the desire to give the Saturnians much opportunity for hardy adventure.

A. S. in the meantime chose Jupiter as his planet. It is worth noting that the two dream-worlds of the two loving brothers had nothing in common, though the game of "planets" was played in each other's company. The Jovians of A. S.'s world did not come into touch with the Saturnians of P. S.'s world. Each group had its own enemies and fought its own wars; as regards each other they were neutrals. Both groups wore granite armor covered with steel wire (of all uncomfortable clothing!) but their helmets were of different design; those of A. S. being more artistic. P. S. had as totem animal, the tiger (in later years the kingbird); A. S. always the lion. P. S. had a blue flag; A. S. a red.

The planetary "saga" was always one of war, intermingled with some explorations. Both guns and swords were used and airships of all types. The enemies were always unspeakably cruel and were usually far more numerous than the war-band of the hero. Usually they were dark in complexion. (P. S. was brunette, A. S. blond, but villains are always brunettes in romantic tra-

dition, at least before the war with Germany, so that perhaps hardly signifies.)

A. S. died at the age of six. His imagination was far more vivid and fertile than that of his elder brother but what it would have developed into can never be known.

P. S. continued his game of "planets"; usually alone, sometimes with any other youngster who played with toy soldiers. The game remained substantially an epic of war. Two changes were made in the game as played by P. S. Mona dropped into the background and was replaced by another saga hero named Ahfahcah or Afaka. No explanation of this name can P. S. hit on. Mona was remembered as a hero of times past, killed in ancient wars, and thus a certain continuity was kept to the saga. The country of the hero was given a definite shape instead of being spread all over the planet Saturn. The new country of Saturnia was modeled on South America in form but was many times vaster in area and more mountainous. Instead of the tiny war-band of a few hundred which figured in the earlier form of the legend, there was a population of a billion.

By the time P. S. was ten or twelve years old the wild poetry of the earlier imaginations had been stereotyped into a more definite and systematic form. Saturnia was a constitutional republic divided into a dozen States (all shown on maps and all given names, some purely fanciful and some—such as "Colrad" from "Colorado" —derived from real words). There were two political parties, with one of which the hero was identified. P. S. himself was always of the same party. Political contests within the country supplemented the monotony of foreign wars. But foreign wars continued. Enemy nations, known at different times as Uranians (from the planet Uranus), Nevdians (from the State of Nevada), Creels (name uncertain, perhaps from "cruel"), and Niffelheimers (from Norse mythology), continually in-

vaded the country and were beaten back after heroic wars. The campaigns were worked out with lead soldiers or by maps on paper. The enemy were as before numerous, cruel, and brunette. They were invariably the invaders and their cause was always unjust. They were always defeated in the end but only after years of struggle and many initial successes. The Saturnians were led to battle by successive generals, Ahfahcah, Curtil, and Agatha. Also by P. S. himself, sometimes in his own (earthly) name and sometimes disguised by such *noms de guerre* as Brahgē (from Norse mythology). The national flag was white with a blue border; the enemy's flag was purple and gold.

Saturnia also developed in peaceful lines with "language, institutions, and laws." It had railroads, the chief line being the "Western Limited"; also an air service. Mountains and forests predominated rather than farm lands or big cities, but the billion inhabitants were very prosperous and, save in war-time, lived comfortably. They had many inventions unknown in this world, and mysterious sources of power. Great buildings, such as the universities and the national capitol, covered a square mile apiece, in grand, gloomy, imposing Romanesque style. There was much fine scenery, with mountains ten miles high and rivers ten miles broad. The "strendir" (strand-deer?) lurked in the forests, a white-coated mastodon with tiger's claws, and hunting was a favorite sport, though second to war and aviation and the exploration of new lands.

This carries the story down to adolescence. When P. S. was about seventeen the country of Saturnia was rechristened Gladheim (from Norse mythology) and deliberately developed into a Utopian country with perfect institutions. With this change we pass from the unbidden imaginings of childhood to the deliberate creations of the imaginative intellect and it is therefore unprofitable to follow the further development of the saga,

save to note that some of the old place and person names were carried over into the new Utopian commonwealth, and that the old tradition of being armed for defensive warfare against materially superior though morally inferior enemies was maintained. Probably the "moralization" of the saga, turning the country which had once been just a dream-country into a Utopia or ideal country, may be counted as typical of the transition from the child to the adult.

The relation of the imaginary companion to native tendencies is very obvious in these reports. Sometimes the instinct dramatized is the need to be companioned by a contemporary of one's own, or the desire for an exclusive affection with its accompanying jealousy of possession, or the longing for appreciation or the sense of personal deficiency. Sometimes the instinct for leadership is in evidence; sometimes the instinct of fear.

And the days of the imaginary companion appear to be numbered by the development of instinct.

Whimsical indeed are some of the circumstances attending its departure from this mundane sphere. I myself one day sat down unwarily in an armchair seemingly unoccupied, to the great dismay of a little sister who cried out in sorrow that I had killed "Jenny," a form of psychical murder that quite ruffled my composure and aroused sad memories of other imaginary characters slain by the critic settling down in *his* armchair!

Matrimony, too, may have an annihilating effect as appears from the report of a little girl whose companion answered to the euphonious name of Susan Doozenberry.

"One day my mother read in the paper that Miss Doozenberry was married. I knew it must be Susan and I felt very badly." No longer, it seemed, could Susan attend to the strenuous duties of companioning a little girl.

Often the make-believe companion vanishes when the child goes to school and becomes one of a social group. The erstwhile comrade is forgotten as naturally as we forget other friends of other days. Sometimes, though, one is greeted by the old friend in an unexpected fashion. Thus George came home beaming from his first day of school. The shadowy Mary of his dream-life sat just across the aisle from him!

This communicativeness of the small George concerning his make-believe companion is somewhat exceptional. Most children maintain a great reserve and are thus driven to many subterfuges to have their way in entertaining their small guests without the knowledge of grown-ups. As for example the youngster who always crowded her flesh-and-blood neighbor on the buggy-seat in order to make room on the outside for the intimate friend of her inner life.

For many children the imaginary companion is a fixed and constant creation, an expression of an unvarying and fairly simple emotional need, often projected into a curiously realistic and unchanging figure clearly imaged in all details even to shoe-lace and hair-ribbon.

But there are other children whose creations are as numerous as their varying moods and alternating emotions. To-day they may be conscience- or fear-smitten

and worship the saint of unswerving holiness, but tomorrow the zest for adventure is warm in their blood and they are questing far, companioned by a conscienceless pirate. The Fair One with the Golden Locks may lure them into fairy-land or the Imps of the Night beckon them into forbidden places.

"I am certain," writes a woman of the story-making temperament, "that if all of my imaginary companions could be gathered into one group, there would be enough to start a good-sized village, and if each one could be placed in the surroundings in which as a childhood companion she lived, this idealized village would present a chaos of architectural and landscape effects of startling grotesqueness."

And it is, one conjectures, the children of such versatile needs, responsive to a rich and complex instinctive and emotional life who develop capacity for character-creation in life and literature. The stronger the biologic hunger, the more insistent the demand for gratification in some form of embodiment.

The ideals and dream-companions of the adolescent boy or girl are very largely variations on the same theme as that exemplified by the imaginary playmate. But they frequently take a more objective form and have social significance.

A story-book character or a great historic character or an individual in the youth's environment may become his pattern for imitation. Self-identification with those in our environment who are what we would be or possess what we lack is a well-nigh universal feature of the impulsive life. The significance, in understanding charac-

ter, of knowing with whom the individual most readily identifies himself is recognized in work with patients suffering from mental disturbances, and physicians have coined the term "emphatic index" to "designate the person chosen as the ideal." Among male patients Napoleon is by far the favored character, testifying to the deep-seated will-to-power, pathetically evident in those who fall by the way.

But the love-motif, evident even in many child reports, dominates the companion-making tendency of adolescence. In a few confidential reports the development of the imaginary companion has been traced from childhood through adolescence into maturity. The character-creativeness of the love-life may be as simply motivated as that of childhood.

It is an outgrowth of many instincts, not that of sex only. The desire for appreciation, to be understood, to be protected, reappear. Love may seek a duplicate of oneself or an idealized personality. Sometimes the ideal love is a complex synthesis of extraordinary complexity; the crystallization of the ideals, the aspirations, the philosophy of years; an embodiment in another personality of the mysteries of life and eternity. Chateaubriand writes:

The ardor of my imagination, my timidity, my loneliness drove me to retreat within myself; because of the failure of a real object I invoked, by power of my vague desire, a phantom who never left me—I created a woman from all the women that I had seen. This charmer followed me everywhere, invisible. I amused myself with her as with a real being; she varied at whim of my madness. Pygmalion was less in love with his statue.

How often does love in anticipation project its ideal in an imaginal embodiment? We have no material upon which to answer this question. Those realistic projections, almost hallucinatory of childhood, sometimes visual, sometimes auditory, may or may not be duplicated in the imaginations of the dreaming lover. The influence of eye-mindedness or ear-mindedness upon choice of a sweetheart has not yet been determined.

But if we may trust the novelist, lovers as well as children may visualize their ideals.

"I always thought you were tall," exclaims the *Gentleman from Indiana* on first meeting the little lady of his dreams and *recognizing* her by her gold-brown hair, her gray eyes, and "short upper lip like a curled rose-leaf."

The character-creations of mythology and of primitive religions exemplify from another side the companion-making tendency of the childlike mind. In one sense God must always be conceived as the Imaginary Companion, a fulfilment of the unsatisfied desires, the One Who Understands.

Says Arnold Bennett in writing of the author's craft: "First-class fiction is, and must be, in the final resort, autobiographical." And, again: "The foundation of his [the novelist's] equipment is universal sympathy. And the result of this (or the cause—I don't know which) is that in his own individuality there is something of everybody."

The modern student of human nature would probably accept Arnold Bennett's second alternative and explain

universal sympathy as due to the manifold nature of the fictionist. This leads us to a discussion of the dramatic instability that so frequently characterizes the creator of characters.

In such instances there is no mere embodiment of an object to satisfy a particular desire or to compensate for a given inadequacy in life, but a dramatization by the self of the personality. One becomes other than oneself. This character is created from within. When projected, such realization constitutes a very real form of character-creation.

The most spectacular form in which human instability reveals itself is that of the dissociated personality.

Dr. Prince, in a book much more fascinating than most novels, "The Dissociation of a Personality," has acquainted us with the various personalities that sojourned in one individual. In the firm he investigated —all tenants of one body—there resided at least three individualities: Miss Beauchamp, conscientious, reserved, studious, called by her physician "the saint"; Sally, impudent and imprudent, a fascinating imp of a child, "the sinner"; and Miss B., a normal amalgamate of saint and sinner, named by Dr. Prince, "the woman."

Dissociated or split-off personalities are a very rare occurrence; we cite them only to introduce by an extreme example something that all of us experience, namely, fluctuations in mood or interest so extreme as to give a different color to the pattern that as an individual we present to the world.

Definite mental sets crystallize in different habits of

reaction. One's mental set as a shrewd business man permits one to do things that one's churchly "set" would look at askance.

Very significant are these "mental sets" of ours, these diverse patterns of reaction which, like our garments, we change to harmonize with the occasion. As a matter of fact, clothes are a sort of symbol of change of "temper"; and one finds it difficult to keep the hospital-set of mind while wearing a conventional evening-gown, or the striker's attitude in a dress-suit. In Arthur Somers Roche's story clothes changed "The Dummy Chucker" into a gentleman. Varied interests precipitate varied personalities: father of a family, leading preacher, baseball fan, teller of big-fish stories—all may coexist in one individual without much conflict. Yet conflicts between interests arise on sundry occasion. The clergyman's conscience may interfere with his embellishment of his best story or his enjoyment of a Sunday game. It is only the narrow and inflexible individual of one mental set who is never hesitant as to what course of action to pursue, what mental set to give free rein to.

Varied interest is not the only cause of mild splits in personality. Variation in mood is quite as potent. In one's hours of melancholy there is a complete shift from the rosy-hued anticipations that lured one on when the sky of the mind was blue and sunny. No wonder our acquaintances find us incalculable! We have doffed our smile and donned a sour cast of countenance.

To preserve a certain stability of reaction so that our friends and foes may know what to depend upon, we adopt all sorts of manners and conventionalities and we

economize on aliases. But the multiple selves of us, not to be denied, seek egress in a hundred ways. They adopt a continual masquerade to get away from the straight-laced notion of us that our relatives cherish. The so-called temperamental type of person abounds in inconsistencies. But probably he is never as inconsistent as he would like to be. As story-writer and novelist he may, however, enlarge the field of his activities, become as many individuals as he has capacity to be.

There are many devices current by which the self may shunt itself, as it were, to another circuit. Take, for example, the pet-name; or since we are interested in the story-writer, the pen-name. This is a device for throwing off inhibitions, for freeing the deeper impulses of the personality. Says a writer in the "Dial": It enhances "the ease and freedom and un-self-consciousness which a writer is at liberty to enjoy when he gives expression to his thought or invention, his whim or his fancy, without being saddled by that Old Man of the Sea, his own personality in the form of an irrevocably unalterable name, with all that name has come to stand for in his own mind, in the mind of others, and in the mind of that supreme intelligence that knows him for what he really is. To objectify or dramatize oneself before putting pen to paper seems to promote a freer flow of words, to bring a richer supply of images, to fertilize the invention and stimulate the fancy."

It is not ours to choose the family name, with all that it implies of traditional traits and limitations. We are not even granted the privilege of choosing our given name, which often represents a parent's compensatory

make-believe, as when we are called Rex or Venus. We are not allowed to nickname ourselves but must submit to our playmates' reading of our strange aspirations or stranger physiognomy. But when we write tales we put on at will our magic mantle, the assumed name.

Some of the famous pen-names of literature have come to stand for very distinct character-patterns, quite different from that of the workaday writer. Under shelter of his darling alias the novelist has spun plots and coquetted with dream-friends who would refuse him even a bowing acquaintance while cumbered by his original patronymic. Think, for example, of the *White Rabbit* and the tearful *Mock Turtle* ever daring to confide in Dodgson, the mathematician! Lewis Carroll was another matter.

William Sharp, penetrating critic, could not write "From the Heart of a Woman"; that wonderful achievement was reserved for the woman-part of him whom he named "Fiona McCleod." Very close to duality of personality do we come in Sharp's case.

In a sense, Sharp's Fiona personality simply represented an emotional complex. He explained to a friend, "I can write out of my heart in a way I could not do as William Sharp, and indeed as I could not do if I were the woman whom Fiona McCleod is supposed to be, unless veiled in scrupulous anonymity." And again, "Should that secret be found out, Fiona dies."

But in another passage, taken from a letter to his wife, a different tone prevails. "There is something of a strange excitement in the knowledge that two people are here, so intimate and yet so far off. For it is with

me as though Fiona were asleep in another room. I catch myself listening for her step sometimes, for the sudden opening of a door. It is unawaredly that she whispers to me. I am eager to see what she will do—particularly in 'The Mountain Lovers.' It seems passing strange to be here with her alone at last. . . ."

Sharp lived doubly, a twofold emotional life that was perchance just on the border-land of the pathological, though it would be a venturesome person who would dare to tell us how many of Sharp's quaint references to Fiona are allegorical, how many are literal in intent. From true duality of personality to such an emotional complex as that of Fiona is but a step; perhaps one step more in another direction carries us to character-creation in general.

Our greatest creators of character seem indeed to be somewhat at the mercy of their children as though the latter had an independence of their own. Dickens's characters had a delightful way of assuming objectivity, lifelikeness, and had their whims. *Mrs. Gamp,* for example, spoke to him only in church. While we find little evidence of real dissociation in the literary genius, we are continually running upon manifestations of non-conscious activity. In fact we find so much evidence of such activity in the creative mind that we are ready to assert that creativeness is certainly fertilized by submissiveness to the guidance of non-conscious factors.

In conclusion, let us review the two possible types of character-creation: those created from within by a dramatization and projection of one aspect of the self; and

those fitly described as fantasies to compensate the creator for an inadequacy in his own life.

The women characters of men novelists and the men characters of the woman writer show this distinction in clear-cut fashion. The masculine writer may create a woman who would satisfy certain needs of his own, a beautiful creature possessed of all feminine charms or a comfortable housewife whose proper setting is in the kitchen or at the head of a table. The woman writer idealizes a protector properly armed with a saber, a machine-gun, or a bank-book. Such embodiments of instinctive demands are like the imaginary companions of childhood, fairly simple personalities embellished with graces by a practised hand or left as wooden figures to be finished by appropriate costumes. Matrimony may banish such fantasies.

The adored mother, rather than the lady-love, may be the dominant woman of a novelist's tales. Read Barrie's delicious chapter on "My Heroine" in "Margaret Ogilvy." Hear the chuckle with which his mother greets the heroine in each of her son's books. "He tries to keep me out, but he canna."

Says the son, "She was not meant to be you when I began, Mother; what a way you have of coming creeping in!"

Characters created dramatically from within are much more complex. They too represent a cleavage along instinctive lines, but the writer becomes in a sense his own character. The heroine of the great novelist is no longer the man's ideal of what a woman should be or the negative of such virtues; she is the expression of the

man's participation in a dual nature. The great women characters of literature are as definitely bisexual as their creators; *Portia*, the masterful and the alluring; *Cordelia*, the truthful and the tenderly maternal.

Real personalities blossom in the experience of fluid-minded children like *Sentimental Tommy*, whose myriad dramatizations are in high contrast to *Grizel's* pathetic vision of herself grown to be a "good woman."

The high degree of instability characterizing myriad-mooded personalities may have tragic consequences; it may issue in inability to maintain any center of personal equilibrium. The creative genius pays highly for his gift.

> He who lives more lives than one,
> More deaths than one must die.

J. H. D.

CHAPTER XI

PLOT-MAKING AS A SAFETY-VALVE

Just as imaginary companions come into being because of the failure of life to satisfy the deep-seated desires of the individual, so fictitious events are fabricated to gratify our love of adventure or of beneficent or despotic power or to compensate for our social insignificance or our timidity or our stupidity.

Compensatory make-believe is nature's great prescription for the thwarted self. It takes many forms, such as play, day-dreaming, lying, gossip.

In a charming article on "The Compensatory Function of Make-Believe Play," Professor Robinson lists the facts both within and without which keep the child from satisfying his desires. He writes:

He may want to hunt. Perhaps the family cat supplies him with a stimulus to make this impulse felt. But this hunting impulse has become a particularized affair. Hunting is shooting, and he can not shoot because he has no gun. Instead of ignoring a stimulus to which he can not react adequately, he points a stick at the cat and shouts "Boom!" He may then, and perhaps to his sorrow, try to drag in his "dead" game by the hind legs.

By means of his pretensions the child is compensating for the inadequacies of the situation. Or his own

"complex little nature" may interfere with his enjoyment.

For the pure joy of it he would at times like to bring down a stout club upon the head of his playmate; that is, he would like to do this if it were not for the disconcerting facts that he would not like to hear his playmate cry in pain, and that he would not like to feel the blows of his playmate's revenge. And so the two boys will play at fighting.

And again:

Children are constantly recognizing inconsistencies in their play-life and trying to patch them over as best they can. When, as a very small boy, I played with tin soldiers and miniature locomotives, I always felt the inappropriateness of the size of my own body. The device which I hit upon to get around this difficulty I called *playing you are nothing*. Every playfellow who entered into the world of my tiny armies and railroads was introduced to the proposition of suspending all interest in his own body. The running of the trains and the marching of the troops were to be considered as events independent of ourselves. There was one youngster who could not push a locomotive across the floor without playing *he* was the engineer. His fate was obvious. I never invited him to play unless I could get no one else, and when he did come it was to be made miserable by my constant insistence that he must play he was nothing.

The psychoanalyst has convinced many of us that night-dreams reveal suppressed wishes. We refrain nowadays from confessing our dreams at the breakfast-table, which is so much on the credit side of the psycho-

analyst! Day-dreams are also a revelation of our heart's desires, which may however be perfectly respectable.

A recent writer on dreams suggests that the amount of sleep we need each night is determined by the number of suppressed wishes we have to gratify and that successful men like Edison sleep little because their waking hours are so satisfying. One may take this with several grains of salt. But it is true that day-dreaming is the more indulged in the greater the need for compensation for a dull life. A young girl writes a description of the imaginary world in which she lives. It is a lovely one of blooming rose-gardens and green lawns. Her realistic description leads to the comment, "How beautiful your home-town must be!" Her home-town beautiful? A barren mining-camp where a blade of yellow grass is an event; a tree, a miracle; and a flower unimaginable!

The ill-fed children of the slums attend in their hours of reverie sumptuous banquets; so does the convalescent kept on light diet. The hero and heroine of Wells's novel "Marriage" when reduced to meager rations find themselves occupied in constructing elaborate menus instead of the profound philosophies of life for the sake of which they had isolated themselves for a winter in Labrador.

Snubbed by society we wear the ermine and crown in our private fantasies and turn an insolent eye upon our kneeling courtiers. Or if very young we enjoy the fantasy of the adopted child and devise a thrilling climax with the advent of the royal parents.

In the "Little Boy's Utopia" which Margaret Wilson

has reported so delightfully, "the milk-jug is always full; you can keep pouring out and pouring out and it never gets empty. . . . You can slip your dinner under and the appetite stays on top." Best of all in this Utopia, time does n't go away. "It 's time all the time."

Day-dreams may stimulate achievement. The little girl who longs for great braids of hair falling below her waist may turn to flaxen strands of rope; she may borrow her mother's carpet-rags and rival an up-to-date belle with her tinted tresses. She may even wield the hair-brush the magic one hundred times night and morning.

The small boy day-dreaming of gigantic stature of mind and body mounts the highest pair of stilts he can find or rejects the proffered cigarette. The youth visioning fame sharpens his pencil and puts a finer point on his daily theme.

But the dreamer who uses his dream as an excuse to avoid contact with reality and the discipline that comes from bumping into life itself is in a bad way. Such day-dreaming is a form of shell-shock; it is a flight from reality, moral cowardice. It is not enough to dream. One must make one's dreams come true in life—or literature.

In two somewhat disconcerting forms private fantasies intrude upon *real life*. I refer to the lie and to gossip.

The child's lie that grows out of his make-believe propensity may express also the child's deep-seated longing to gain recognition for his private fantasy. The social impulse in us all leads to a desire to have our

faiths shared. How much more real seems the imaginary lion we spoke of so casually when our playmate begins to question us concerning the length of its mane or the depth of its growl! (Particularly delightful are group fantasies: Santa Claus, for example, or the Easter Rabbit.)

Another's faith in our make-believe is a long step toward actualizing our dreams, and as children we sometimes put them in words and try them out on grown-up folks—usually, of course, with explosive and yet benevolent results. We adjust ourselves to a bigger reality at cost of a fiction or two. But the dynamiting of castles in Spain should unquestionably be entrusted to very gentle anarchists.

Life itself in the form of parent, teacher, or playmate criticizes so successfully the lies of fantasy that most children soon make the distinction between the inner world where extravaganzas may be staged at will, and the outer world to whose whims one must conform if one would be socially comfortable. In fact, so thoroughly do most children and adults accept the social censor of their dramas that a confident liar is rarely met with. Nearly always the skilful psychologist is able to trace his deception through change in breathing, in color, or in fluency of speech.

So uncommon, in fact, is the successful liar that he is spoken of as pathological and labeled mentally disturbed. The pathological liar, be it remembered, differs from the ordinary sort in that his fabrications have no simple common-sense explanation, as a desire to get out of a difficulty or to appease an irate employer or teacher.

He is attempting to thrust upon reality complicated plots—fantasies that were meant for private consumption only. He lies for the sake of lying, as the kleptomaniac steals to steal and not to lay in an oversupply of fans, furs, and umbrellas. He is well-named the mythomaniac.

Of course, in its milder forms we have little inclination to snub such compensatory make-believes. The story of the big fish or prodigious child is recognized as a legitimate indulgence. We smile at the mother's fantasy because we recognize its compensatory value not for mothers only but for every son and daughter of us.

The liar in good form may even be welcomed in the country-house, if not welcomed too frequently. One recalls Henry James's delightful *Colonel Capadose* with his unlimited ingenuity in fabrication. One also recalls the poor wife entangled in a cobweb of deceit which she ended by accepting as part payment for her marital joys.

The pathological liar gets into the lime-light when on the witness-stand in court. To entangle his skein of deception is a task requiring great ingenuity. Dr. Healy has studied a number of most interesting cases. Let us cite one, that of Hazel M., a girl of sixteen years:

One morning she appeared at a social center and stated she had come from a hospital where her brother, a young army man, had just died. She gave a remarkably correct, detailed medical account of his suffering and death. In response to an inquiry she told of a year's training as a nurse; that was how she knew about such subjects. In company with a social worker she went

directly back to the hospital to make arrangements for what she requested, namely, a proper burial. At the hospital it was said that no such person had died there, and after she had for a time insisted on it she finally said she must have been dreaming. . . . The next day Hazel started in by saying, "It 's enough to convince anybody that I was not in the hospital when Mrs. B. and I went there and found out that they said I had not been there."

Hazel's stories of the next few days gave descriptions of life with her family in several towns, of her graduation from the high-school in Des Moines, of her experience as a nurse in Cincinnati and Chicago, . . . of the Cliff House at San Francisco, the seals on the rocks there. Then a shrewd detective ferreted out her family, though she had denied the existence of any of them in Chicago and indeed had stated that her father and mother had died years before.

One of the most convincing things about her was her poise; she displayed an attitude of sincerity combined with a show of deep surprise when her word was questioned. For example, the moment before her mother was brought in to see her she was asked what she would say if any one asserted that her mother was in the next room. Her instantaneous, emphatic response was, "She would have to rise out of her grave to be there."

We soon learned that not a single detail the girl had given about her family was true. She was born and brought up in Chicago and had never been outside of the city.

Under systematic treatment Hazel was in the course of four years cured of her tendency to falsification.

Not long since a Sunday supplement to a city daily under the head-line, "Heroine of Battle-Fields, Descendant of the Royalty of Three Nations," featured an amazing story of a French nurse recuperating in Denver from wounds received in the World War. The article was illustrated by an entrancing picture of a queen on her throne, becrowned, besceptered, bejeweled. She was Countess de Montespan, descendant of the houses of Hesse, Marlborough, and Montespan.

The story under the head-line and picture was worthy its introduction. Not only queen by heritage, direct heir of the third Napoleon, but genius in her own right was the illustrious countess—a surgeon of international reputation, graduate of the "Royal Medical Clinic" of Berlin who, at command of Cardinal Gibbons, had gone to France during the war-days and served as a surgeon with the order of the Gray Nuns.

Among the myriad other soldiers whose lives the countess-surgeon saved there was one—a baron—whose wife she later became. By miraculous coincidence this husband—a second one—had exactly the same name as her first, bore a marvelous resemblance to him, and proved to be his cousin, though she had never heard of this second one until they met on the battle-field. But the countess was more than a surgeon; she was a gifted artist, a linguist of seven tongues, and a great philanthropist. She had adopted and raised eighteen children besides her own son, a famous musician.

The scene shifts now to a justice-court in a town in Wyoming where some weeks before the countess had been tried for practising medicine without a license and

bound over for trial in the district court, after which event she vanished into thin air with an invalid husband —the baron—and a brother-in-law. Her next appearance was via the Sunday supplement.

In the Wyoming chapter of the story the lady is frequently mentioned in the records of the social service secretary, as a devoted wife who is soon to be a mother, nursing a totally disabled husband and his disabled brother, herself a victim of the war, twice wounded. The attention of the Red Cross had been directed to her because of a letter written to one of its officials by a physician in the town who asks:

> Is it right for three who gave all to do with so little when Rupert carried $10,000 insurance but has not been able to pay his dues as he was not able to stand up long enough to receive his discharge but received it lying down, being completely disabled for three months before being discharged.

It is not difficult to locate the three people so described, but the physician who signed the letter cannot be identified. There is no one in the community practising under the name signed. But there is, it seems, a new physician in town, a woman-physician whose professional card, "Physician and Surgeon Licensed for the State of Wyoming," appears in the daily papers, with reports of births attended and death-certificates granted. And in the social column of the daily paper there is an account of a birthday party of a woman doctor, the guest-list containing the names of celebrities. Inquiry reveals the fact that it is this physician who sent the

letter to the Red Cross authorities, signing one of several names which she had acquired by various devices. Further inquiry revealed also that this letter written in the character of physician was designed to center attention on her as wife. It was she, her husband, and brother-in-law who, as the letter proclaimed, gave all and received no aid from the Government. And it was for this family that, as attending physician, she asks an investigation. Well, she gets it—too much of it! Investigation revealed no license to practise medicine either in Wyoming or any other State. Instead of years of service in France, there were years of labor in a penitentiary. Her greatest achievement had been the acquisition of five husbands. When she appeared in the justice-court, she was bound over to the district court for practising without a license. Suddenly she vanished. As she was soon to become a mother—or so she claimed—the authorities dropped the case.

Some weeks later the aforementioned Sunday supplement featured her case in the flamboyant manner described above. Then again silence. But recently the Denver registrar of vital statistics received a letter from Montana asking if a certificate had been issued in that city for the birth of a girl to the woman the preceding summer. It had not. The registrar in answering encloses a blank to be filled out. When it comes back she finds to her astonishment that the mother is listed as an empress and the child as a countess. It is our old friend, the countess-surgeon. She also requests a duplicate birth-certificate to be filed in France. Is the baby fact or fiction? Does any one know? Even the countess?

Dr. Healy's skilful analyses have laid bare many of the mental conflicts that issue in "pseudologia phantastica," which is the technical name for what ordinary people call "lying." And investigators have been interested in determining how often patients suffering from pseudologia phantastica have shown evidence of linguistic or literary ability, for it is evident that in imaginative constructions properly sponsored they might find a safety-valve for their facility in fabrication.

The liar should saunter magazine-ward, not jail-ward. In that case, too, he might enjoy the thrill of being blown up by adverse verdicts. Some day the vocational expert will be at hand at the proper moment to direct his youthful footsteps.

In a sense, all psychical alibis, all sour-grape remarks, are a species of lie, directed, however, self-ward. Marcus Aurelius taxed himself with dishonesty because he pleaded lack of time as an excuse for not answering a letter. But nearly two thousand years later this defense is not worn threadbare. We are still too good to play the game of politics, too modest to be famous. We really prefer dandelions—to the labor of digging them up.

A popular way of compensating for personal inadequacies is gossiping about one's neighbors or reading gossipy lives of the great or the near-great. Gossip is a sort of lightning-rod for the discharge of accumulated personal electricity.

When we gossip we look at the actors on life's stage through the wrong end of the opera-glass and among such Lilliputians feel ourselves giants indeed. Or we see our neighbor reflected in our teaspoon, under which

condition, as George Eliot said, even Milton must consent to having the facial angle of a bumpkin.

No man is a hero to his valet, which is not only wholesome for the hero but comforting for the valet. It reconciles him to his invisible halo.

In yet another way gossiping is a safety-valve. It permits us to stretch our imaginations and to indulge in fantasies which the social censor prohibits our putting on the boards. All the daring wicked things, the desire to do which lies deep buried in human nature, may be scanned virtuously when labeled by some other man's name. One may play at will with the scandalous details, embroider luridly scene and motives, and again safely, because pseudonymously, so to speak.

Perhaps some trifling flavor of truth gives an added tang to a scandal. The possibility of your neighbor actually being arrested for breaking the seventh or the ninth commandment enlarges the license you may give your imagination, while a trial in court justifies a whole community in head-lining motives.

The psychoanalyst handles gossip just as he handles dreams. Your favorite repertory of scandals shows your deep-seated interests and desires. The vicarious flirt and the vicarious thief are life's profiteers. They have the fun without paying the piper.

And yet of course the imagination of the efficient gossip does her great credit. She is a peripatetic Sunday supplement, vastly entertaining and disturbing only because she gives her stories too much local color. Let her syndicate her inventions and publish them broadcast instead of reserving them for a limited circulation.

For, after all, none of us is as wicked as we would like to be and the gossip's expression of secret aspirations will also satisfy our suppressed wishes.

Absolutely immune to gossip one would be absolutely without human sympathies—or frailties.

Make-believe, as we have seen, is usually active in the service of a desire or fear. It creates a mental object to satisfy the demands of love or hunger or to explain terror. Imagination is only make-believe become aggressive with a determination to objectify its creations so that they may win social recognition. This recognition it wins the more easily, the more successfully it creates objects that satisfy the desires of many others beside itself; an object of social love, of social adoration, or of social justice.

Men of dominating imagination are copartners with nature in the creation of worlds of reality. They build a pyramid that defies the elements, a sphinx that faces the desert with infinite irony; they send into the clouds Gothic pinnacles or themselves ride on the currents of the air. They unravel clashing sounds and weave them into harmonies; they create gods and madonnas more potent than those attested by the muse of history.

Make-believe carried out as private fantasy cuts one off from social living and may land one in the asylum. Make-believe busied with objectifying its creations in picture or poem or song so that others may share the creator's satisfaction may speed one to the heights of influence and fame.

Great literature is obviously the compensatory make-believe of a great mind. It has universal appeal be-

cause it voices a universal dream and suggests its fulfilment. The sorry scheme of things is shattered and remolded nearer to the heart's desire.

Very simple and obvious is the unfulfilled desire compensated for in Lamb's "Dream Children" or Tennyson's "In Memoriam." Very elaborate the drama in Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound." Much of the tragedy of Shelley's life grew out of conflict, first with a narrow intolerant father, then with a dogmatic and short-sighted world. Rebellion is a sustained theme in this poet's creations; rebellion at first self-centered in its motives and in its phrasing, but at last completely sublimated in that incomparable lyrical drama, "Prometheus Unbound." No longer is it Percy Bysshe Shelley who is wronged, deprived of his heritage, but the bringer of fire to man, to a people who dwell in darkness.

It 's a nice point in literary technic where the author shall keep himself while manipulating the plot. Shall he, like the small boy of an earlier paragraph, "play he is nothing"? Or shall he insist upon being the engineer and running the story in his own person?

It would seem that great authors, like small boys, have different opinions on this matter and like the latter sometimes refuse to play together because of a difference in their psychological make-up.

Some writers are always their own hero or heroine. The autobiographical element is much in evidence. Some have recourse to masquerade and hide behind the favorite saint or rogue. Others perform marvels of the split personality and flit rapidly from one character to another.

These differences in the mental make-up of the writer have all sorts of influence upon the way the story is told. The author who plays he is nothing would only infrequently tell a story in the first person and still more rarely in the second. The third person form covers, however, a multitude of psychological possibilities, as well as of literary sins.

J. E. D.

CHAPTER XII

THE CASE-SYSTEM OF LITERARY TRAINING

The preceding chapters have given numerous examples of where great and little fictionists have found story-material. In the remainder of the book we suggest the "case-system" of study in training for fiction-writing, give further hints to the young writer of where to look for literary stuff, and show the possibility of applying modern methods of measurement in estimating the degree of literary ability possessed by an aspirant to literary honors.

The personal letters to the papers on any subject are more profitable reading for a novelist than other novels. Too much of our literature is parasitic. It consists of books that have grown out of books instead of real life. An indolent author finds it easier to get his knowledge of human nature at second-hand—or third or fourth-hand—rather than take the trouble to dig it out for himself bit by bit from the people he knows. The common novel is like the mold that grows on a lichen that grows on a mistletoe that grows on an oak. The vital sap is much diluted before it gets to the third parasite.

Now one can not know intimately many people. The novelist is not allowed to use the post-office as a clinic and read all the letters. Some of our writers have been

making great use of what they learned from acting as censors during the war, but such opportunities come rarely, or so at least we hope. Next to private letters come the letters to the press, although these are written consciously for publication and more or less edited. But even such are not to be neglected, for they sometimes afford a glimpse through a window of the soul.

Arnold Bennett confesses that he acquired his knowledge of feminine fashions and psychology when he was editor of "Gwendolin's Column" in a ladies' paper. As he says:

> I learned a good deal about frocks, household management, and the secret nature of women, especially the secret nature of women. As for frocks, I have sincerely tried to forget that branch of human knowledge; nevertheless the habit, acquired then, of glancing first at a woman's skirt and her shoes, has never left me.

Samuel Richardson, who was said to be the first English novelist to understand the heart of woman, got his training in a similar way. There were no columnists in the eighteenth century, but by the time he was thirteen he was as private secretary writing love-letters for three young women and he continued to be the confidant and correspondent of many of the sex until his death at seventy-two. After he was fifty-two London publishers begged him to utilize his unique knowledge by writing a series of letters of good advice to servant-girls on their love-affairs. He set to work and within two months had turned out the two volumes of "Pamela," which started a new school of English fiction.

With these high precedents no writer need disdain to peruse the columns devoted to "Side-Talks with the Girls," "Advice to the Love-Lorn," "Hints to the Heart-Broken," and the like which appear daily in our newspapers. Some of these letters are sent in as jokes by college-boys. Some are composed by the columnist to fit what he or she wants to say. But most of them are genuine human documents, silly, pathetic, and tragic, as heartfelt as the London "Times" Personals and not so cryptic. There is also good psychology to be found in the columns, now so popular, of letters on "My Most Embarrassing Moment." The "case-system" of study is as valuable in training for fiction-writing as for law-practice.

THE CONFESSIONAL COLUMN

An English woman explains the Personals of the London "Times" as an escape-valve for the repressed emotions characteristic of the English people. Americans are not supposed to suffer so much from reticence and repression, but they too seize any opportunity to expose their troubles to the world under the veil of anonymity. Let an editor open a column offering advice on financial affairs by "A Wall Street Broker," on affairs of the heart by "Aunt Mary," on household difficulties by "The Wise Lady From Philadelphia," on etiquette by "Mademoiselle Comme Il Faut," on medical matters by "Dr. Vitamine," or on religious doubts by "The Rev. Dr. Goodman," and he will need another blue-and-white bag to bring the mail from the post-office. Probably if one of our yellow journals started a

column headed "Counsel to Unsuspected Criminals by C-33," men and women would hasten to confess their secret sins as frankly as a good Catholic confesses to his priest.

It may be said of such columns more truly than of most of the paper that they "fill a long-felt want." One motive for rushing into print with one's private affairs is doubtless the delight of revealing one's feelings while concealing one's identity, which is the charm of a masked ball or a carnival or street frolic. This is the unconfessed motive of many a novelist too. But apart from that there is a genuine desire for advice in matters that are for the readers very serious questions. And for the most part the advice they get is sensible and helpful, however trite it may sound to the sophisticated. Anybody who reads over these letters, especially those that are not answered in print, will be convinced of the earnestness and distress of most of the writers. The reader of the paper, especially the man reader, may think it silly of the fourteen-year-old girl to ask the editor if she is "too young to wear silk hose," but probably the poor girl has spent more than one sleepless night over the problem. And it is no joke for a girl to miss a date with her sweetheart by fifteen minutes. If the reader can not see the pathos in the letter asking "how I can learn to like an old bachelor" he may as well quit trying to make a writer out of himself and go into carpentering.

Let not the would-be writer despise and neglect what seems to him silliness. If his books appeal only to those who are free from any sort of silliness they will have a

very limited circulation. If his books contain no silly characters they will be very silly novels. Let him remember Arnold Bennett admits that he "learned about women from" the letters he got as "Gwendolin." It is good training but a hard life, that of mother-confessor. It is rumored that three strong men have broken down under the strain of bearing the feminine *nom de plume* of the most popular of the purveyors of first aid to the heartbroken.

We give only a few of these letters, for the reader can find plenty just as good in almost any popular paper that he buys at the newsstand.

I am a girl seventeen years of age and am considered very good-looking. I go to high school but am never invited to any dances although the young men at school seem to like me. Some of the girls I know that do not dress nearly as nice as I do, and are not at all nice-looking, go to ever so many. Do you know why this is?

NANETTE.

Would you kindly tell me how I could lose a young man's friendship? I am a girl of seventeen and am considered very pretty. The fellow I'm speaking of is four years my senior and is very ugly. He is very tall and has extremely red hair, which I detest. When I'm out with my friends he is always butting in.

CURLY-HAIR.

What do you think of a fellow who has two girls? He likes one just as much as the other. I am one of those girls—sixteen years of age. We both love him, and he seems to return both of our affections. I asked him to give either one of us up, but it seems to be a hard proposition for him to do. Saturday night he took me out, and Sunday night he took the other girl out. When she finds out he takes me out he says she doesn't mind, but when I find out he takes her out I get jealous. What would you advise me to do?

I have been going with two different boys, writing to both, and almost leading one to believe that I like him when I care nothing for him. My other friend has become very jealous and does not care now as he used to.

What can I do to make him care, and continue with both?

I am a girl of nineteen and am keeping steady company with a young man of twenty. He has as much as proposed to me two or three times. That is, he has not said so directly, but has asked me what kind of diamond ring I like and other little things like that; also in talking of his future he includes me in it.

He says he loves me and that he will never give me up, but he doesn't seem as affectionate as I think he ought to. I am not the kind of girl who likes what is known as "mushy love," but still I don't think my friend is quite as lovable as he ought to be.

Do you think that maybe he is sort of reserved, or can you

give me any other reason for the way he acts? I realize that this is a rather difficult question for you to answer, as you do not know him, but I thought perhaps you have had more experience than I have in this line and could help me out a bit.

MAY.

Some time ago I met a fine young girl of my own age and went with her for some time, until one day I walked home with her when she was kind of uppish, and ever since when I see her on the street she does not speak, although I seem to know that she likes me. Can you advise me how to make up with her?

One morning I saw her and she smiled but she was still mad. I never had nerve enough to ask her out to the movies with me or any place else and will you please advise me how to ask her and when? I always try to go careful with a girl but it all seems to go against me.

JAMES.

I am an English girl, sixteen years of age, and my parents insist upon my marrying a man twenty-four years of age, because of his wealth. Can I not do something? I hate this man.

I am a fellow twenty years old and I am in love with a girl, nineteen. Now this girl seems queer to me. One minute she seems to like me and the next minute she is different. Every time I take her out (no matter where to) she either sits and bites her fingers or sits in a corner and says nothing. Our courtship has been nearly a year and a half now. Lately she seems to turn to my chum and then back to me. What would you do if you were in my place?

CLARENCE.

I am in love with a young man and I think he loves me also, as his actions indicate as much and I have been told by friends that he loves me truly. He has recently gotten a car and we have been taking drives into the near-by country and he has gotten into the habit of telling me funny stories. Do you think if he really loved me that he would persist in telling me those stories when I do not want to hear them?

I am going with a young man four years my senior. I love him. Having a date with him one night at 7:30 I happened to show up at a quarter to eight and he was not there and on the same night I met him at a school dance and he said he was through with me, and while saying it he smiled and said that I was going with another man the same night, which was a lie. Will you please advise me if it is right for me to make up and how, or to let him make up with me?

I am in love with a fellow, but do not know whether or not he loves me. Advise me as to how to find out without asking him, or how to win his love.

Would you kindly tell me why girls and boys close their eyes when they are being kissed? Thank you ever so much.

I am a young man of twenty-one and, although I hold a responsible position in a bank, I am at a loss to know how I can answer this question.

Recently a young lady, a friend of mine, introduced me to a friend of hers in whom I took a great interest.

I would like to see this other girl some time without hurting the other girl's feelings. What would you advise me to do?

I am bringing to you the greatest problem of my life. I am a young man, considered by all the ladies very good-looking. I find it impossible to win a girl on account of my stuttering. Every time I start to proclaim my love for a girl, I immediately begin to stutter. On this account I am desperately unhappy, and will you please tell me how I can remedy this fault so as to win a girl and make my happiness complete?

STAMMERING N.

I am a girl of fourteen and am wearing puffs. Do you think it is right for my sisters to say I am too young to have my own selection in my dresses and shoes? I have two other girl friends who are only fourteen and have their own selection in everything. They wear their hair to suit themselves. Am I too young to wear silk hose? Please answer my letter soon, for I am dying to hear from you.

I want your advice about how I can learn to like an old bachelor and win him.

I am going with a girl who is one year younger than myself and whom I love.

She has stated many times that she cares for me, but every time I see her she quarrels with me and does not talk to me for some time. Then after she gets over her quarrelsome rage I make up. Then she is as true to me as ever.

Do you think I do right by making up with her, and do you think she cares for me when she acts in this manner?

We are two girl friends who are engaged to two very fine young men. All preparations are being made for our double wedding, which is to be real soon. But we are very undecided as we have met two other young men of whom we think so much more. Of course we can not decide what to do about it as we can not tell our fiancés. What can we do about it?

TWO PALS.

As I am an orphan and have nobody to turn to for advice, I turn to you, the world's best friend, and beg of you to answer me one question: Should a person follow the dictates of the heart or the conscience? B. G.

For answer, B. G., I would advise a troubled conscience is a much harder thing to live with than a troubled heart.

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS

One would think that the last thing a person would want to tell the public about was when he made a fool of himself. Yet when some ingenious editor opened a column in which people were to write about the most embarrassing incident of their lives he found an abundance of contributors and readers. The interesting thing about the letters from a psychological point of view is that the incidents in many cases are so exceedingly trivial that one would suppose that they would hardly cause a moment's annoyance, yet they have evidently been the cause of long-continued distress. They have formed a complex as the Freudians would say, and hence the desire to confess it to the world. A large pro-

portion of them date from early adolescence, when one is most sensitive to humiliation. The cause of the painful impression is almost always the loss of self-esteem, or rather the self-felt loss of the esteem of others.

The most embarrassing moment of my whole life happened about a year ago in a local candy-store, where I was drinking a soft drink and casually smoking a cigarette. As I was just about to flick the ashes off, a young lady passed me and received the fire and ashes both on the back of her coat all unbeknown to her. As I perceived the fire, and not wanting to burn a hole in the coat, I immediately started to brush them away, wherewith she turned, gazed at me and haughtily inquired, "Sir, how dare you?" It was then that I realized the thing had happened without her knowledge, and amidst the laughing of the crowd in the store I humbly made my exit.

I was thoroughly absorbed in teaching an English class when a devoted little girl in the front seat scribbled a note and handed it to me. It read: "Miss H.: The end of your switch is sticking straight up."

When I was eighteen my family enjoyed teasing me about a young man who delivered groceries to our house. As we were of the bashful sort, I always made an effort to absent myself from the kitchen whenever he was expected.

One day, however, I was on my hands and knees scrubbing the kitchen floor, when I heard him coming. I just had time enough to crawl under the kitchen table, and thought I would keep mum until he left. Everything went all right until he emptied the potatoes into a basket, when one rolled on the floor under the table, and he went after it.

One winter day I was passing a church just as the congregation was gathering. Every one was walking in the street to avoid the extremely icy walks. Just as a good-looking girl was turning toward the church she slipped and fell down. I hurried to assist her but I forgot the ice!

The first thing I knew I was sitting close beside her—almost cheek to cheek. I hastily arose and helped her to the walk, but, believe me, I was much too embarrassed to see the funny side, as did the lookers-on.

The next time I see a girl in distress I shall pass by on the other side. F. B.

I was to have a date with a man from out of town and the day before the date, I received an invitation to a dinner-dance for the same night. I accepted after having carefully found out just who was invited. The day of the dinner arrived and I called up the out-of-town man and explained carefully that I had sprained my ankle and would be unable to keep the date. Imagine my embarrassment at finding myself seated next to this same chap at the dinner. The hostess had invited him at the eleventh hour in place of a guest who had disappointed her.

A girl friend of mine had just arrived from a neighboring city to pay me a visit.

As we walked from the railway station in company with another girl, the visitor surveyed the different buildings in sight, and remarked: "You have a lot of pretty homes here, haven't you? But whose can that barnlike dwelling over there be?"

After a moment's embarrassed hesitation on our part, my local girl friend answered cheerily, "That is where I live."

The other day a girl in the bank in which I'm employed came over and asked if I would like to read one of the Embarrassing Moments. It was about a girl who had bought a broom and, wrapping it, thought she could get it safely home without any one noticing it. She had n't gotten far when the wrappings were off.

After reading it, I said, "She must have been a dumbbell to imagine she could disguise a broom."

I looked up and met an icy stare.

She said: "I was the dumbbell." R. S.

Some time ago I met a lovely woman at a social affair and invited her to call. She took the opportunity to call one afternoon while she was in the neighborhood, but I was so busy scrubbing the front porch that I did not see her coming until she was too near for me to escape. My hair was still in crimpers, my dress untidy, and as she had seen me but once before, I decided to take a chance.

"Mrs. Blake," I said, "will see you in a few minutes."

I hoped to get a chance to change my costume. Her expression showed she thought all was regular, but just then a dear friend passed by and greeted me by name. For a moment my caller seemed puzzled, then, walking away, she said courteously, "I 'll come some other time."

I feel now as though I could walk miles out of my way to avoid meeting that woman.

My most embarrassing moment occurred while attending a theater with my friend.

It was a pathetic scene which was being shown as we came in, and the audience was so attentive that the slightest noise could be heard throughout the theater.

We had just been seated, when my friend screamed. As quick as a flash all eyes turned on me, as I turned all colors of the rainbow.

While taking off my hat I had absent-mindedly stuck my hatpin in my friend's leg. Do you wonder she screamed?

I was approaching the climax in an amateur play with which we had had a week of wonderful success. Stealthily I crept up behind the villain, who in silks and laces, dark curls on shoulders, and a really fine figure, had almost eclipsed our blond hero. Swiftly I reached across his shoulder to secure an important document. I got the paper all right, and, lifting it high above my head with a dramatic laugh, I waited confidently for the applause which always followed.

Something was evidently wrong this time, however, for instead of the expected applause there was a horrified gasp from my romantic villain and then such laughter as that old playhouse had probably never before heard.

Bewildered, I looked about me, still maintaining what one of my dear friends called my "Indian chief triumphant" pose. One look at my villain, however, solved the puzzle. In securing the paper so vigorously I had also clutched one of the villain's long black curls, and he now sat stunned, in all the disillusioning nudity of an almost totally bald head.

During my college days I went out one evening with a young man friend and discovered upon my return that I had forgotten my house key. Not liking to arouse the sleeping household, we investigated the windows and found one which would open.

I had just climbed inside when I heard a man's voice call out, "Who's that?"

'It 's just Lulu," I answered, reassuringly.

"Well, who in thunder 's Lulu?"

I had got into the house next door!

I promised my friend that I would go to the show with him, and after a while changed my mind. He was to call for me at six o'clock. When the bell rang I told my little brother to go to the door and say I was not home. My friend asked him where I was. Imagine my embarrassment when Freddie turned toward me and said: "What shall I say now?"

HEADLINES AS CLUES TO PLOTS

We have in America nothing corresponding to the agony column in the London "Times" but we have something quite as agonizing, that is the newspaper head-line. This is an American invention for saving time, like the telephone and express elevator. Its object is to convey the gist of the news in the fewest possible words so that it may be gathered between bites at a quick-lunch counter, the breakfast-table, or while hanging by one hand from a strap in a crowded street-car. Whatever else we may think of it, the American newspaper heading is an interesting literary exercise, comparable in difficulty to the construction of an acrostic or sonnet. In structure it resembles an overture which begins with the simplest form of the main motif. This is then repeated in more developed forms and the subordinate themes of the opera introduced one by one until the whole is woven together in complicated correlation just before the curtain rises.

So, too, in constructing the head of a newspaper article the first line must give the main point. The second and subsequent lines repeat it in other words and with fuller information. The opening paragraph of the text tells the story over in other words and with all the detail that can be packed into a sentence. Then follows at full length the complete story in orderly narrative

fashion, but so written that the tail of it may be cut off inch by inch without killing it if the make-up requires such curtailment at the last moment. The number of letters in each line is fixed within narrow limits and it is also required that each line must contain a verb in the present tense, expressed or implied. This is merely a grammatical way of saying that only action is news. The head-line artist gets into the habit of expressing his ideas in sentences of, say, fifteen or thirty-six words each. He thinks in numbers for the numbers come. If you suppose his is an easy task ask a friend to cut off the head-lines of a newspaper-clipping and tell you the number of letters required for each line. Then see if you can write as good a set of head-lines within three minutes as did the copy-reader on this article. In foreign newspapers the head-line does not tell the story but merely indicates the subject, and that often vaguely, as "Financial Crisis" or "Balkan Imbroglio."

It would be interesting to trace the effect of head-lines on the mentality of newspaper readers and on the development of the American language, but that subject must be left to some graduate student in English who is in search of a Ph. D. thesis. But I may mention one conspicuous instance of the influence of the head-line on language and that is the prevailing tendency toward the use of monosyllables. The polysyllabic propensity of the old-fashioned newspaper writer has been checked by the introduction of the dynamic head-line where the words must be as short, forcible, and definite as possible. This leads to such briefer or abbreviated forms as "Jap," "Hun," "L" for elevated railroad, "dry" for prohibi-

tion, "wire" for telegraph, "car" for automobile, "flu" for influenza, "movie" or "film" for cinematograph, "kick" for remonstrate, "probe" for investigate, "Frisco" for San Francisco, "Chian" for Cheyenne, etc.

Such contractions and the free use of evanescent slang make our head-lines unintelligible to foreigners and even to ourselves unless we are familiar with the subject. Englishmen found difficulty in comprehending that the caption "Wales Is a Mixer" was intended as a tribute to the democratic manners of their future sovereign. "Holy Cross Romps on Boston" might be misinterpreted by a reader unfamiliar with the sporting page. A classic example—let me say rather, instance—is "Cop Croaks Crook by Clip on Coke." When Guiteau was executed more than one paper headed the account "Sent to Satan." So we can hardly blame a later reporter who, when he was writing up the execution of a murderer who repented on the scaffold and announced his hope of salvation, followed suit by heading his story "Jerked to Jesus." In those days newspaper men depended so much upon "apt alliteration's artful aid" that the dailies came to look like circus-posters or Anglo-Saxon poetry. Therefore the practice fell into disrepute and nowadays the best editors frown upon alliteration or taboo it altogether.

Newspaper head-lines often give an erroneous idea of the article below, sometimes intentionally because of editorial bias, more often accidentally because of hasty reading. An account of the experiments of the United

States bureau of fisheries in the destruction of malaria-carrying mosquitoes by the introduction of minnows into ponds was sent out under the caption "Fish Prevent Malaria." But an editor, seeing that the head did not fill out his column, amplified it to read "Fish Prevent Malaria; Eat More Fish."

Head-lines are the opposite of the Personals in that they are intended, not to transmit a secret message to one person but to attract the attention of all. But they are likewise written in an elliptical cable-code style and so are sometimes equally stimulating to the imagination. Many a novelist gets incidents and ideas from the curious incidents that the keen-scented reporter discovers and dishes up in such piquant fashion at our breakfast-table.

It will not be necessary to give many of them here for they can be clipped from any daily, but below are a few that may suggest a "story" to the reader, though perhaps quite another than the one they originally headed.

E. E. S.

Head-Lines From American Newspapers

FARMER KICKS HIS LITTLE SON TO DEATH FOR LISPING

MAN FINED $50 FOR CALLING HIMSELF NAMES ON STREET

GIRL ALTERNATELY CHILD OF FOUR AND MISS OF NINETEEN

FOUR PRETTY RUSSIAN GIRLS FLEEING FROM BOLSHEVIKI COME FROM CONSTANTINOPLE TO FIND AMERICAN HUSBANDS

HAD 15 HUSBANDS, FORGETS NAMES OF 11.

CIRCUIT COURT RULES THAT A BEE CAN ONLY STING ONCE

SAM GETS TEN DOLLARS FOR BEING HUNG

BREAKNECK RACE FOR A CRAB-FLAKE; "JUST BULLY," SAYS BRITISH GOVERNOR GENERAL'S DAUGHTER[20]

JUDGE REFUSES TO ANNUL JOKE MARRIAGE OF VIRGINIA COUPLE

CAN MAN MAKE LOVE IN AEROPLANE? "YES," SAYS WIFE ASKING DIVORCE

ILLITERATE MAN OF FORTY BECOMES SCHOLAR IN TWO YEARS FOR WOMAN'S SAKE

BURNING OF STORE CAUSES SUICIDE OF BROTHER AND SISTER

KIDNAPPERS TAKE GIRLS FROM ESCORTS AND DRIVE OFF IN AUTO

WEALTHY FAMILY OBJECTS TO MOVIE-ACTING ON ESTATE

MAN WHO WAS "DEAD" TELLS HOW IT FELT TO HAVE SOUL PASS FROM BODY

CUPID HAD A HAND IN THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE SALESROOMS

MUTT AND JEFF OF UNDERWORLD AGAIN STAGING HOLDUPS

MEN MAY NOT ASSIST IN SORORITY RUSHING

CLAIMS THEY STOLE HIS DWELLING HOUSE

FEROCIOUS WHAT-IS-IT INFESTS THE BIG-HORNS

GIRL'S DEMAND FOR HER PET PARROT RESULTS IN STEMMING PANIC AT SEA

AVOIDS CHURCH WEDDING AFTER BUYING TROUSSEAU

SECURITIES VALUED AT $75,000 SAID TO BE CONTAINED IN CHEST WHICH DISAPPEARED SHORTLY BEFORE MURDER WAS COMMITTED

MAN SHOOTS SELF IN CIRCLE DOCTOR DREW OVER HEART

WHO WAS THE PIED PIPER OF YOUR LIFE?

MOCK SANTA CLAUS MURDERS GIRL OF FIVE

FRENCH HOME HAUNTED WITH DELUGE OF NAILS

MADE HER LIVE ON PEAS 3 WEEKS WIFE SAYS

JUDGE SOBS WHEN KATIE SHOKOS ADMITS SELLING MOONSHINE TO BUY MILK FOR HER BABIES

PHYSICIANS SAY FLIRTING MAY CURE INDIGESTION

[20] The story of this head-line may be found in S. M. McKenna's "Lady Lilith," p. 99.

JURY FINDS OUIJA-BOARD NOT GUILTY OF SLANDER

TEMPEST IN MONTCLAIR OVER FELINE VAGRANCY

Traps Ordered to Catch the Cats that Kill the Rats to Save the Birds That Despoil Gardens

IRISH BLOOD RALLIES DYING RUSSIAN JEW

PARIS EX-POILU SHOT BY WAR GOD-MOTHER

SKIPPER SAYS HIS WIFE HELD WHEEL WHILE HE FOUGHT MUTINEER

POPULAR LECTURER ON "WHY WORRY?" COMMITS SUICIDE

HARVARD STUDENT SUES EX-FIANCÉE FOR RECOVERY OF PRESENTS

BOBS HAIR AT 110

MME. MAETERLINCK'S PEKINESE FLIES AT THROAT OF ACTOR PLAYING GOLAUD AT REHEARSAL

LOVE RESTORES VISCOUNT GREY'S SIGHT; HE IS TO MARRY SOON

WORE WINGED HEELS BUT HE LOST 'EM

LIVE SOLDIER GIVEN MEDAL FOR DYING

GIRL BREAKS MONTH-LONG SLEEP ON DAY BEFORE HER WEDDING DATE

LEAVES BASKET, ASKS FOR BABY, GETS FOUR

TRAP-DOOR IN HEEL IS USED BY MEXICAN TO SMUGGLE DOPE

YOUTH LOSES RACE TO BE PRESENT AT HIS OWN FUNERAL

MAY SELL TOMBSTONE AT PUBLIC AUCTION

WICKED FLEE WHEN NO ONE PURSUETH

WOMAN BEQUEATHS SALOON TO HER HUSBAND

TWO MONEYLESS TRAVELERS SAY HE OFFERED TO FINANCE THEM WITH BAD DOLLARS

SINGING ELEVEN OF FOOT-BALL MEN MAKES NOVELTY

CHEATER'S CONSCIENCE CAUSE OF HIS DEATH, SAYS DOCTOR

PORTABLE JAILS ARE LATEST FAD

LANDLADY'S PROFIT ONLY $116 FOR NINE MONTHS' WORK

FOREIGNER STEALS CONFIDENTIAL RADIO REPORT AFTER KNOCKING ARMY OFFICER'S WIFE UNCONSCIOUS

ANGRY WOMEN PERIL TO BUS CONDUCTORS

JEALOUS WIFE KILLS HUSBAND AND TYPIST IN HIS OFFICE AFTER SPYING

FIND STOLEN STOCK WORTH $78,000 IN HOLLOW BEDPOST

WISCONSIN MAN FORBIDS ANY OF FAMILY TO WED

AFFABLE WAITER RUDE AT HOME

BRIDEGROOM AND BEST MAN ARRESTED IN ATTEMPT TO AUCTION AUTO

WOMAN SMUGGLING HEROINE FROM CANADA DIES IN PULLMAN

QUIZZES FILM ACTRESS ABOUT GOING BAREFOOT ON MOTOR RIDE

KILLS BOBCAT WITH BARE HANDS

WILLIAM ROCKEFELLER BUILDING $250,000 GRANITE MAUSOLEUM

BOYS FIND RICH HOBO FROZEN TO DEATH IN HAUNTED HOUSE

WOMAN OF MEANS WITH INFANT IN ARMS STEALS $15 DRESS AND IS SENTENCED TO WORKHOUSE FOR SHOPLIFTING

CARRIED SIX QUARTS OF WHISKY TO HIS WEDDING BUT LOSES BRIDE, LIQUOR AND FREEDOM

WOMAN TAKES POISON ON LEARNING RECTOR IS MARRIED

PARIS GARDENER FINDS JEWELRY WORTH 600,000 FRANCS, STOLEN FROM MME. BEAUREPAIRE IN JULY, 1914, AND BURIED UNDER TREE

MAN MAROONED FIVE HOURS TOP OF 150-FOOT CHIMNEY BEMOANS LACK OF CIGARETTE

BLIND GIRL REGAINS SIGHT AS SALVATION ARMY LASSIES SING

POISON PEN LETTERS DRIVE TWO HUSBANDS TO SUICIDE

GOLD NUGGET FOUND IN CROP OF CHRISTMAS GOOSE: GRAVEL BED STAKED OUT IN MINING-CLAIM

GROOM SUES FOR ANNULMENT 30 MINUTES AFTER MARRYING; SAYS WIFE WON'T LIVE WITH HIM

SOURCE AND PURCHASER OF $825,000 PEARL NECKLACE STILL A MYSTERY

GOLD STAR WOMAN OF 100 NEEDS A HOME

JUDGE TELLS COUPLE SEEKING DIVORCE TO SELL AUTO AND BUY HOUSE

MINISTER CRITICIZED FOR PLAYING JAZZ RECORD AT HOME

NEWSPAPER ITEMS AS STORY-GERMS

No fiction-writer need ever worry about plot-germs—whatever source of worry he may find in germs of another sort—so long as the journalist continues to collect them for him in his world-wide laboratory. Life itself conspires with the journalist to keep him busy. Plot-material may be found in any newspaper sheet, whether it be published in the small town of Sundance or cosmopolitan New York. Life is much more generous in its bestowal of dramatic moments than some folks would have us believe.

The skeletonized news stories of the now popular tabloid journals are well adapted to the writer's needs. They tell just enough to stimulate the imagination and yet not enough to paralyze the invention. The journalist in reducing the story to this form has picked out the particular point that makes the incident interesting—whatever is strange, romantic, astonishing about it—and has cast away the more or less commonplace circumstantials. The novelist has to reverse this process and to clothe the incident in the details that give the story verisimilitude and reality. But do not attempt to restore the original incident as it actually happened. On the contrary it is much better practice to see if you can give an interpretation and motive as unlike as possible to the obvious one the facts suggest. Think what a turn O. Henry would give to the plot—in the last paragraph. But do not try to write like O. Henry. He gained his success by writing differently from anybody else. Go thou and do likewise.

We are giving below a few newspaper items—chosen just as they came to us in the course of our breakfast scansion of the daily paper to show the kind of clippings one may make for his scrap-book of plots. From this general selection one may then select at leisure those best worth elaboration or those in harmony with one's own gift.

The first of these casual clippings might well inspire a Gautier to write a "Roman de la Momie." The second might serve for a plot for a story as good as "Somehow Good" by William De Morgan.

E. E. S.

Archeologists in Egypt unearth a rock chamber containing the mummy of a headless young woman. On her breast lay a valuable necklace of carnelians and amethysts, inscribed with the name of Sesostris I, who reigned B. C. 1980-1935. In the tomb were a bronze mirror and three alabaster boxes of cosmetics. (NOTE: To understand the significance and horror of this one must recall what the Egyptians believed regarding the resurrection of the body and why they embalmed their dead and built pyramids over them.)

A veteran of the World War found wandering in streets of Rochester. Cannot remember his name or how he got there but thinks he had married a girl and left her in Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City. Bride, a Richmond girl, orphan, married two weeks before, found in the hotel, alarmed at disappearance of husband who had left three days before to collect back pay in Washington. Bridegroom had been aviator in Argonne offensive and had crashed in forest where he lay for three days unconscious.

TRENTON, N. J.—A tombstone to tell the world he originated the ice-cream soda is provided in the will of Robert M. Green.

TOKIO.—Iogo Fuluda, a millionaire lumber dealer, has married Miss Noka Oti, a Japanese girl who was kidnaped twenty years ago by strolling Chinese players and made their slave. Fuluda helped her escape from China last summer.

Mary, fourteen years old, sophomore in high school, attempts to end her life because she was tired of being "nothing but a drudge as mother was." Since her mother's death two years ago she has taken care of father and three younger children, cooking and housekeeping. Her father had scolded her because she had not paid the baker with the money he gave her. Here Mary took up the story:

"I ran out of the house and hid under the front porch. I stayed there all night. I'll say it was cold. I slept a little, I suppose, then I got up and walked around and then back

to my hiding-place. I must have done this a half a dozen times. I was afraid of what father would do to me over the bread bill and determined to commit suicide. I had never stolen anything before, but we did n't have much fun, and I spent most of the bread money on my brothers.

"I heard my father leave the house soon after six o'clock and then I went in. I wakened Willie and Johnnie and sent them to school. Then I sat and thought for an hour or two, wondering whether I really ought to end my life. I had been working too hard, with school and all, I guess, and finally decided to kill myself. I went into my room, shut the window, locked the door, and turned on both jets. When the room filled with gas I was sorry for what I had done and turned off the jets."

A brown carrier-pigeon, exhausted and half-starved, arrives at a Brooklyn dove-cote. Attached to its leg is a scrap of a manila bag on which is written with a lead-pencil: "Stranded on island 23-47; help." The owner of the dove-cote is sure the message came from his son who was lost in a sailboat two months before.

A woman stayed in hiding in New York several days by registering at a hotel under her own name and eating in the public dining-room.

The formation of a dead men's club out of the 2000 ex-service men who, while living, are officially listed as killed in action, is a probability. One of the "casualties" who was gassed and left on the field in Picardy has suggested the formation of such an organization.

If present plans are followed out, this town of 250 buildings and dwellings will gather up its belongings, pack up its buildings, and start moving a mile and a half distant. Motion-picture cameras will grind away, preserving the unique record of a whole town sliding away on railroad tracks.

Engagement wanted by actor. Small part, such as dead body or outside shouts.

A man killed himself that he might prove his theory about returning spirits.

Arthur states that over thirty novels and photoplays have been dictated to him by spirit messengers. His spirit advisers do not seek any reward for their literary feats. Their object is to sweeten and lengthen the life of man upon earth while assuring him of immortality. How could one arrive at the compensation of spirit directors and how pay them if a reasonable amount were determined?

The germs of unrest have infected even the beyond. When ghosts return these times, do they seek the gloomy calm of mossy manse or country land? They do not. They come galumping right where things are thickest and most modern. In New York they are haunting the trolley-cars.

Sometimes the ghost merely rises up from behind a cemetery wall in the vicinity. At other times it canters down the road with a gravestone on its back. But when it actually hopped aboard a trolley, empty except for the conductor, and attempted to ride as a deadhead without paying any fare, nineteen stalwart young citizens decided enough was a plenty.

"I don't know what to do," moaned Mrs. Grace here to-day. "I 've tried hard to think of some way, but I just can't."

She had just received a message from her first husband, Fred, who was reported "officially dead" in France by the War Department in 1918. It read:

"Just landed on Aquitania. Will leave immediately for home."

"Fred went away in 1917," she said. "The next year he was reported dead. Later a body we supposed his was brought back and buried in the family lot here. I married again, a few months ago."

War-risk insurance carried by Fred was collected by his wife months ago, she said.

Ravenna, Italy.—The closing ceremony of the Dante celebrations was held here Tuesday. Fragments of the poet's bones stolen in 1865 and recovered shortly afterward were placed with the other parts of the skeleton buried here.

When "Diamond Jim" Brady decided to sell railroad supplies instead of being a hotel porter, he put all the money he had into a $100 bill, tore the bill in two, and sent one-half to a great railroad man with this message, "The other half of this would like to see you."

A court order directing Mrs. James to wear for thirty days each year under police guard the $100,000 pearl necklace of a relative, in order to keep life in the gems through their contact with a human body, was issued by the superior court at San Francisco.

A Kentucky judge has taken under advisement the case of Old King, a blooded foxhound, on charge of murdering sheep.

Will motor-cars in the future perfume our streets with the scent of attar of roses instead of the evil-smelling mixture which offends our nostrils as they pass?

"Young barbarians all at play" at a state agricultural college committed an unpardonable offense the other evening for which they must reckon. They captured a famous cow-boy and by force shaved a mustache from his face that was the pride not only of the individual cow-boy but of the cow-boy profession. A vendetta has been declared—the war of the shaven mustache.

POSITION WANTED; STENOGRAPHER.—I am twenty-two and never expect to marry. I haven't bobbed hair nor do I chew gum. The boss's wife need not have any worries about me. I want a position where I will be able to save enough money some day to go to the South Seas and get away from people.

VARIOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

Hints of plots and personalities may be found in almost any advertisements of a personal character. An offer to swap off articles one is tired of shows a change of taste that the reader is curious to account for. The descriptions and adventures of missing men often bring up a vivid picture.

EXCHANGE

TYPEWRITER and case to swap for rifle, 6 by 8 tent, and fishing tackle.

CLARIONET, E flat, low pitch, fifteen keys, foreign made, value $20. Will trade for .22 repeating rifle (not loaded).—C. E., Big Fork, Montana.

ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA, twenty-nine volumes in full sheep binding, eleventh edition. I want a leather, or imitation leather, davenport and a Colt automatic, .32. P. F. V., Malta, Montana.

MISSING

TILDEN, STELLA CLARA.—She was born in Aitkin County, Minnesota, on April 15, 1898, and moved with her parents to Gordon, Wisconsin, in 1905. When she was eighteen years old she went with her parents to Bismarck, North Dakota, where she disappeared on April 21, 1916, since which time no word has been received from her, and no knowledge has been obtained as to what has become of her, or how she disappeared. She is of fair complexion, tall, with grey eyes, is good looking, and a fluent speaker. The little finger of both hands is quite crooked. Any information as to this young girl's whereabouts will be most gratefully received by her sorrowing parents.

SMITH.—I was put in a school in Tarrytown, New York, when I was one year old and I stayed there for ten years. When I was eleven years old I was taken by a family named Burns in Wellsville, New York, who took me to a farm. I am now nineteen and would be very glad if I could see some of my relatives. I joined the army for three years so as to get a home. William J. Smith.

OLLMAN, ROY, formerly of Omaha, Nebraska.—He is about thirty-five years old, five feet nine inches tall, and has a scar on his upper lip. He left Frisco in 1912 for Manila, Philippine Islands, went to Port Darwin, Australia, joined in a prospecting expedition in Northern Territory, and left Pine Creek with others for the coast. He was last heard of in Sidney in 1915, heading for the United States. It will be to his advantage to get in touch with his old partner.

STARKE, ELBERT. — He is thirteen years old and small for his age, has light brown eyes, sallow complexion, straight sandy hair, and is very talkative. He disappeared from his home in Miami, Florida, on October 27, 1921, and no trace of him has been found since. He had some money and it is thought that he may have gone on a boat, as he was anxious to take a trip to Cuba. His parents are grieving at his absence, and his mother is quite ill with worry. When he left he wore a khaki flannel blouse, knee-length trousers, and had no hat or shoes.

CONFIDENCES, OVERHEARD CONVERSATIONS, TITLES

The lines of research suggested by the material just presented do not exhaust the pleasant possibilities open to the student. There is perhaps nothing more profitable than to be the confidant of others or to eavesdrop with discretion—on chair-car or Fifth Avenue bus.

Spend ten minutes in jotting down confidences you have received that contain plot-germs. This game will give you some idea of how tenaciously your memory

holds material that has literary value. I will share with you a number of confidences that have been given me, although some of the best ones I have I must keep secret.

Last week a young man told me he had already written one hundred love-letters for friends of his in the working-class. "They always bring results," he asserted. He had just brought to a satisfactory conclusion an interesting romance, of which he gave me the details.

A few months ago a physician confided in me. He was attending a woman whose honesty had been several times under suspicion. Her husband was contemplating divorce because of this fact.

"She 's a hystero-epileptic," said the doctor, "and hyper-suggestible. If ever a case against her comes into court I can prove that every time she steals the suggestion comes from her husband."

Here 's another one from a physician. His patient, a young married woman, confessed to him that there was negro blood in her family, of which her husband was absolutely ignorant. She implored the doctor to kill her child if he should show the mark of the tar-brush.

I once had two acquaintances who were reputed to be passionately devoted to each other. Both confided to me the intimate story of their friendship and each told me that she hated the other and would free herself from the tie except that she was afraid of the effect on the other.

Now that complexes have become fashionable the mental specialist hears tales that would furnish Scheherazade with material for another thousand and one nights

of entertainment. These confessions are often professional secrets but clinical material may be put to use indirectly.

Overheard conversations may also suggest stories. A second ten minutes may be profitably employed in jotting down conversations that have possibilities of development.

1

Scene: Chicago rooming-house; eleven o'clock, hot summer night; my transom is open; also my window which leads to the fire-escape.

Loud knock on the door of the room next to mine.

VOICE OUTSIDE: "You 're wanted in the parlor, Miss."

No answer.

Louder knock and banging on the door.

VOICE OUTSIDE: "You 're in, I know. I saw you come upstairs less than fifteen minutes ago."

The door is tried; it is locked.

VOICE INSIDE: "Go back and tell him I won't see him. I won't! I won't!"

Retreating footsteps; then their return.

VOICE OUTSIDE: "You 'd better come quietly to-night, Miss. It will be less humiliating than in the morning."

VOICE INSIDE: "I won't! I won't! I won't!"

VOICE OUTSIDE: "Suit yourself! The key of the outside door will be removed. Good-night."

2

Scene: Chair-car between Chicago and Cleveland.

Characters: Jolly gray-haired man and pleasant-faced woman, evidently a friend of long standing.

SHE: "I hear Bobby 's married! Not twenty yet, is he?"

HE: "Sh! Sh! Softly, please. My wife 's ahead of us. She has n't heard yet."
SHE: "Just gossip?"
HE: "I 'm afraid not. I 'll find out in Cleveland."
SHE: "She 's a famous beauty."
HE: "And my boy not yet twenty!"

3

Scene: In line University cafeteria, with a distant prospect of eating.
Characters: Dignified, massive, and deep-voiced theologian, and enthusiastic feather-weight theologian.
FIRST: "You heard the Nordsen lecture this morning? Greatest authority in the world on Armenia. Wonderful man!"
SECOND: "Yes! And wonderful wife! She does all his translations for him from the original Armenian."
FIRST: "Ah! His second wife, is n't it?"
SECOND: "His first was even more wonderful. She made his great discovery for him; identifying the Aristotelian quotation in the Gospels; *that* made him famous."
FIRST: "Ah! Extraordinary man!"

Literary invention, we have suggested a number of times, may start from character-conception or from plot-germ. There are two other possibilities. The story may be set off by a title or by a feeling for the atmosphere of a place.

Individuals who find that titles fire their inventive capacity should be on the outlook for stimulating phrases. They should indulge in deliberate title-hunting.

For such a purpose there is nothing better than the Bible. Take the following wonderful passage from Ecclesiastics:

The *heart of the wise* is in the *house of mourning;* but *the heart of fools* is in the *house of mirth.* It is better to hear the *rebuke of the wise* than for a man to hear *the song of fools.* For as the *crackling of thorns under a pot,* so is the *laughter of the fool.*—Ecclesiastes, Chap. VII, v. 4-6.

That passage suggests to me at least eight possible titles, as follows:

Wise Heart;
The House of Mourning;
The Heart of Fools;
The House of Mirth;
The Rebuke of the Wise;
Crackling Thorns;
Under a Pot;
Fools' Laughter.

And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; with cherubim the work of the cunning workman shall it be made; and thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks shall be of gold, upon four sockets of silver. And thou shalt hang up the veil under the clasps, and shalt bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony; and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy. Exodus, Chap. XXVI, v. 31-34.

How many effective titles do you get from the above? There are a dozen at least.

Spend ten minutes, the next time you have access to a library with open shelves, in scanning the backs of books

with the intention of jotting down all the titles that you recognize as Biblical. My scansion resulted in the following list:

The Portion of Labor;
The House of Mirth;[11]
The Fruit of the Tree;
Beside Still Waters;
On the Face of the Waters;
Bricks without Straw;
A Certain Rich Man;
Vain Oblations.
The Gate of Death;
The Altar Fire;
Unto Cæsar;
The Beginning of Wisdom;
The Inside of the Cup;
Hagar;
The Fourth Generation;
The Trimmed Lamp;
The Ivory Tower;
The Golden Bowl;
The Road to Damascus;
Bells and Pomegranates.

[11] Through ignorance of the Bible several critics and doubtless many readers failed to catch the point of Mrs. Wharton's title. Picking out books by title is uncertain business at best. A mother who was ill and depressed sent her little daughter to the public library to get some "cheerful books" to read while she was kept in bed. The girl scanned the open shelves conscientiously and came back with Wharton's "The House of Mirth," Hugo's "The Man Who Laughs," Stevenson's "The Merry Men," and Andreyev's "Red Laughter."

E. E. S.

One should search for titles not only in Scripture but also in Mother Goose's immortal verses. Many an author has done so. "Jack and Jill," "Peter, Peter, Pumpkin-Eater," "The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe" have proved popular book titles; while "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep," "Wee Willie Winkie," and "Georgie Porgie" are favorite titles among Kipling's readers. *Jackie Horner* and his famous pie suggest some fine titles: "Thumb and Plum," for a political story maybe, and there is the delightful "Hi Diddle Diddle" rime with the hinted elopement of *Dish* and *Spoon*. *Baby Bunting, Little Miss Muffet,* and *Mistress Mary* have all played title-rôles.

A literary friend of mine once confessed that he always carried with him in his suit-case when traveling two books, namely, the Bible and "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." The author of "Cabbages and Kings" also no doubt sought inspiration from Lewis Carroll.

Poets without number have furnished novelists the magic phrase that gave atmosphere to the story. Turning casually to the "Rubaiyat" I listed the following titles in twenty-eight lines:

Winter Garment;
Fire of Spring;
Bird of Time;
On the Wing;
Leaves of Life;
Rose of Yesterday;
Singing in the Wilderness;
Cash and Credit;
Distant Drums.

As a final hint to the young fictionist one may urge him to turn over the leaves of Hawthorne's "American Note-Books." He may find just the plot he wants. I give a few notes below just to show the rich mine that here waits working.

A fairy-tale about chasing Echo to her hiding-place. Echo is the voice of a reflection in a mirror.

An ornament to be worn about the person of a lady, as a jeweled heart. After many years, it happens to be broken or unscrewed, and a poisonous odor comes out.

A series of strange, mysterious, dreadful events to occur, wholly destructive of a person's happiness. He to impute them to various persons and causes, but ultimately finds that he is himself the sole agent.

A man, unknown, conscious of temptation to secret crimes, puts up a note in church, desiring the prayers of the congregation for one so tempted.

To represent a man as spending life and the intensest labor in the accomplishment of some mechanical trifle, as in making a miniature coach to be drawn by fleas, or a dinner-service to be put into a cherry-stone.

J. E. D.

EXERCISES ON TITLES

Here are a few more book titles for practice in identification. State the origin of the title and explain its significance. If you do not know the book tell what you would expect it to be from the name.

De Morgan's "Somehow Good."
Charles Reade's "Love Me Little, Love Me Long."
Amy Lowell's "Ivory, Apes and Peacocks."

Hawthorne's "Twice Told Tales."
Nietzsche's "La Gaya Scienza."
Shaw's "Arms and the Man."
Hall Caine's "The Woman Thou Gavest Me."
Kennedy's "The Army With Banners."
O. Henry's "Cabbages and Kings."
" "Out of Nazareth."
Allen's "The Choir Invisible."
Hutchinson's "If Winter Comes."
Hardy's "Under the Greenwood Tree."
" "Far from the Madding Crowd."
White's "In the Heart of a Fool."
" "The Old Order Changeth."
" "Stratagems and Spoils."
Butler's "The Way of All Flesh."
Arnold Bennett's "These Twain."
" " "Old Wives' Tale."
" " "The Gates of Wrath."
" " "Sacred and Profane Love."
Dorothy Canfield's "The Day of Glory."
" " "The Bent Twig."
" " "The Brimming Cup."

CHAPTER XIII

PUTTING A FOOT-RULE ON THE IMAGINATION

A man found guilty of murder is sent to the penitentiary for life.

One day he meets in the prison yard the man he believed he killed.

How will you unravel the plot-complication suggested by those two sentences? Will the convict make an effort to get a pardon? Will he think he sees a ghost or believe he has lost his mind? Will his anger flame up at sight of the man, and will he make another murderous assault? Or will he, as one mild individual suggests, take the opportunity to apologize?

A surgeon is conducting a critical operation.

The hospital bursts into flames.

What will happen? Most readers think the surgeon will continue with the operation, although opinions differ as to outcome. He may be completely successful and save both himself and his patient. He may sacrifice his own life to that of his patient, or both surgeon and patient may be suffocated.

"The patient comes to, and decides the operation has been a failure since he finds himself in peril of fire!"

With a stroke of the pen, tragedy is converted to comedy and an amusing story suggested.

A widow prays for weeks that God will punish the light-hearted couple next door.
The young husband is killed in an accident.

"It was a mean trick!" one young freshman comments indignantly, and "The widow ought not be so religious," remarks another.

For the most part the plot is advanced by the suggestion that the widow feels great remorse and seeks to atone for her sin, or rejoices that God has answered her prayer.

"Yea, God sees the sparrows fall regularly; fortunately he and I are not on speaking terms," is a conclusion which suggests a grim life-story.

An eminent scientist knows he has only a month to live.
He is just on the verge of a great scientific discovery.

He will tell his secret to his most eminent professional rival, is the most common conclusion; or he 'll work harder and complete his discovery before he dies; or he 'll work himself to death before the month is over. A few think he will carry the secret with him to the next world; or he 'll make a greater discovery—what lies beyond death.

Dramatic complications are suggested in other conclusions. "He tells his secret and does n't die; mistaken diagnosis." Or this: "His discovery is the secret of eternal life"—a sketch for a regular Hawthornian story.

By using a series of such plot-complications and asking for a solution from many individuals (try it as a parlor-game; it 's great fun!) you can do two things. You can find out a great deal about your neighbor's mental processes, which as we have said repeatedly is excellent knowledge for a novelist, and at the same time you can find out things about yourself, which is even more valuable information.

In order to measure ability of any kind one must have some sort of standard for comparison. In scientific work one is obliged to simplify conditions and if possible state the outcome in quantitative terms.

It is not at all impossible to put a foot-rule on various forms of talent. Dr. Seashore has invented a scale for measuring special musical capacity. He has modernized the test. You can purchase the necessary material for giving it in the form of phonograph-records and test the whole family at once as an after-dinner recreation.

Literary capacity can also be measured. "A Test Series for Journalistic Aptitude" has been standardized by Max Freyd and reported in the "Journal of Applied Psychology." It is being tried out in various schools of journalism as a practical method of predicting success or failure in the newspaper world.

Mr. Freyd lists the following traits as responsible for good reporting:

High degree of intelligence;
Broad range of information, especially on current events;

Good memory;
Social ability;
"Nose for news";
"Nerve";
Keen interest in reporting;
Language ability.

Mr. Freyd gives tests for all traits except social ability, "nerve," and interest in reporting.

Capacity for writing short-stories, plays, and novels demands some traits other than those listed as essential for a journalistic career, notably dramatic sense, understanding of character, ingenuity in invention (frequently possessed by the reporter!), feeling for the emotional value as well as the dictionary-meaning of words, and natural understanding of the logic of the emotions.

The questionnaire sent out by a well-known correspondence school for photoplay-writing gives exercises for testing the student's dramatic perception or insight and his capacity to develop a problem situation creatively. These are obviously the crucial traits for the writer of silent drama. It would be a profitable matter if the foot-rule could be put early on the student's mind.

Very little has been done by laboratory psychologists in devising and standardizing tests of creative capacity in character or plot work. The "Times" Personals afford excellent opportunity for general scouting purposes in the field. But a simpler form of material is desirable for rating oneself in comparison with the average or talented person.

As a bit of pioneer work I have devised literary

syllogisms, samples of which are given above, and have tabulated the conclusions or solutions obtained from a large number of persons. On the basis of this tabulation I have assigned values to the different kinds of conclusion offered by my students. I am giving here a series of these "literary syllogisms." The reader should write down the conclusion that comes to him on reading each syllogism. After he has completed the series he should turn to the rating scale given below and grade himself on each conclusion. He should then add the scores obtained on each syllogism to get his total grade. The highest possible grade would be 100, but anything over 70 would be passing.

Ten syllogisms are included in the experimental series. They are as follows:

1. Lizzie borrows without permission her mistress's silk parasol.
   She gets caught in a heavy rain.
2. Two families are very friendly.
   The son of one and daughter of the other elope.
3. Maude loses her engagement ring.
   Her rival finds it.
4. An old woman buries her money in the back-yard.
   Her chickens dig it up.
5. A man kills a friend.
   He is drawn on the jury that tries the man suspected of the crime.
6. After a hard fight Smith is elected governor of his State.
   Inauguration day he loses his memory.
7. A poor young man writes a great play.
   A millionaire offers to buy it in order to produce it in his own name.

8. A woman has a dual personality.
   She shifts her personality whenever she sees a funeral.
9. A young girl cries all night.
   She is married next day.
10. A successful politician has in early life served a term in the penitentiary.
    He discovers that his political enemies are going to publish the fact.

Before citing sample conclusions by comparison with which the reader may grade himself, I wish to give briefly the general principle of grading which I obtained from study of a large number of conclusions.

Many readers of the syllogisms merely stated in other words what was given in one or both of the propositions. There is no advance whatever; no suggestion of further complication; or of a solution of the one suggested. This outcome I call a circular reaction and mark O. I shall not give samples of it for the separate syllogisms as it is a fairly obvious matter. A reader who writes after the first syllogism, "It rains on the parasol," is giving a circular reaction.

When the situation is slightly—very slightly—advanced I give a grade of 2. In the first syllogism I would so grade the conclusion "The parasol is ruined." I also grade an evasive conclusion or a vague one 2.

The grade of 4 is given for a conclusion that advances the plot more definitely than does the one just cited. For example, "Lizzie is cured of borrowing."

The grade of 6 is given to conventional and popular plot-solutions that are furnished by a large number of persons. They are often the common-sense solutions.

"The mistress loses both Lizzie and the parasol," is an example.

For the more original and more dramatic conclusions the grades of 8 and 10 are reserved.

I purpose now to give samples for each grade of conclusion for each of the ten syllogisms. The reader must do the rest.

SYLLOGISM 1

Grade 2. The parasol is ruined.
Lizzie feels bad.
Lizzie returns with a dripping parasol.
The mistress is angry.

Grade 4. Lizzie is cured of borrowing.
Little left of Lizzie's next month's salary.
Looks bad for Lizzie!

Grade 6. Mistress loses both Lizzie and the parasol.
Lizzie seeks new employment.
Lizzie afraid to go home.

Grade 8. Lizzie is dismissed but rehired by husband; too good a cook to lose.
The parasol shrinks.
Lizzie borrows another parasol.

Grade 10. Lizzie lies about ruined parasol and is caught.
In a desperate attempt to save the parasol, Lizzie climbs into a garbage-can.
There 's a flood; the borrowed parasol saves Lizzie from drowning.

SYLLOGISM 2

Grade 2. Was it necessary to elope?
Families opposed to marriage.

Grade 4. Parents overtake them and bring them home.
Lovers killed in auto-wreck.

Grade 6. Each family blames the other!
Families rejoice; just what they were aiming at!
Grade 8. Lovers irritated by families' attentions.
Flight from a fashionable wedding, just on the eve of it.
Grade 10. Fled to avoid marriage with each other; each had a partner for flight; double wedding.

SYLLOGISM 3

Grade 2. Maude is angry.
It won't do the rival any good.
Maude should advertise for the ring.
Grade 4. Rival returns ring.
The fellow buys another engagement ring.
Grade 6. Hard for Maude to explain.
Quarrel and broken engagement.
Grade 8. The suitor goes with the ring.
Rival wears ring and pretends she is engaged.
Grade 10. Rival thinks Maude lost ring on purpose.
Rival claims Maude's suitor gave her a duplicate of the ring.

SYLLOGISM 4

Grade 2. She 'll be surprised when she finds her money gone.
Chickens rarely dig so deep.
Money should be deposited in banks, not in back-yards.
Grade 4. She picks the money up and puts it in the bank.
She changes her hiding-place.
Chickens leave the money where they find it.
Grade 6. A tramp finds it.

Money found by small boy and returned to owner.
The money is stolen and the police called out.

Grade 8. The chickens lay golden eggs.
Oh, that chickens had brains!
Money found by son, who invests it in oil.

Grade 10. She picks the money up and advertises for the owner.
She kills her chickens just as the price of eggs is soaring.
A child finds the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

SYLLOGISM 5

Grade 2. Many men make many mistakes.
All depends on the man himself.
Things that never happen.

Grade 4. His conscience hurts.
He 'll commit perjury.

Grade 6. He confesses his guilt at last moment either to the jury or in open court.

Grade 8. Only one of the jury to find the suspect innocent.
Only one of the jury to find the suspect guilty.

Grade 10. Eleven men on the jury pronounce the suspect not guilty; the guilty man by his insistence on the other man's guilt betrays himself.
He tells the jury why he killed his friend; they acquit both him and the man on trial.

SYLLOGISM 6

Grade 2. Smith's wife loses *her* memory.
What good has his work been?

Too much for Smith! Too much of the unusual.

Grade 4. The State Government is thrown into chaos.
He must resign, unable to carry on.
Was n't fit person in first place; mentally weak.

Grade 6. He must resign; unable to carry on without knowledge of past events.
Reads resignation after taking oath of office.
It will make no difference!

Grade 8. His colleagues attempt to carry on for him.
He forgets to go to inauguration; search for him.
Conscience is defeated.

Grade 10. His double assumes the office.
He fakes a memory.
Makes an extraordinarily good governor, has no memory for campaign promises.

SYLLOGISM 7

Grade 2. We can buy anything with money.
Everything has its price.

Grade 4. It 's nice to be able to buy brains!
He sells the play.

Grade 6. He refuses to sell.
Cannot afford to sell birthright for a mess of pottage.

Grade 8. He holds out and wins both money and fame.
He borrows money and produces it himself.

Grade 10. He consents but as time for production approaches repents and burns the play.
He accepts the offer, assumes leading rôle, and ruins the play.

SYLLOGISM 8

Grade 2. She shifts back after the funeral.
She should not lead that kind of a life.

Grade 4. She causes a disturbance at funerals.
Her friends have difficulty in knowing her.
Grade 6. She avoids going to funerals.
A funeral in early life caused a psychic trauma.
She is afraid of death.
Her family try to keep her away from funerals.
Grade 8. She is wildly happy at funerals and causes much hard feeling.
She is a paid mourner.
She changes often! Her husband is sexton.
She must be an undertaker.
Grade 10. She has a weird passion for funerals and commits a murder.
She never knows who is being buried.
Alas! She lives near a grave-yard.
She shifts at her own funeral—maybe.

SYLLOGISM 9

Grade 2. She does not wish to marry.
She does not love the man.
Grade 4. She 'll have to use a lot of powder next day.
Eleventh hour repentance.
Grade 6. She 's in love with some one else.
She 's replenishing the family fortune.
She 's just learned that the groom is not wealthy.
Grade 8. The suspense is terrible!
At close of the ceremony she confesses that she hates the groom.
A red-eyed bride!
Grade 10. She falls in love with her husband after the ceremony.
Good practice; a man always grants the requests of a weeping woman.

He 's in for a hard time. I pity the man in the case.
She 's marrying the man to take vengeance on him.

SYLLOGISM 10

Grade 2. He is out of luck.
All reputable politicians and bootleggers serve at least one term.
Grade 4. He resigns.
He awaits the decision of the public.
He defends himself.
Grade 6. He calls a mass-meeting and tells the story of his life.
He admits the charge and asks the people to judge him by his later record.
He was innocent.
Grade 8. He tries to bribe his enemies.
He finds out something just as bad about his enemies and threatens to publish that.
He hires a gunman.
Grade 10. He beats his enemies to it!
He decorates the State with bill-board posters advertising his history and announcing his political ambitions.
His case serves as text for a fiery revivalist.

Dr. Kate Gordon has devised an interesting exercise for study of the dramatic judgment and she has kindly permitted me to reproduce it.

Miss Gordon writes:

As an introduction to the question "What is dramatic?" I chose twenty-five incidents which seemed to offer a considerable range of dramatic quality, and sub-

mitted them for judgment to a number of persons (eighty-five in all). Among these people about twelve were well-versed in the drama. It was conceded at the outset that the treatment of incident means much, that a great playwright may make almost anything dramatic, and that a poor one may spoil almost anything. But unless the treatment means everything, some situations are inherently more dramatic than others, and it ought to be possible to see some difference in the ones here given. The printed page shown to these judges was as follows:

"Twenty-five situations are here presented in the briefest outline. Some are dramatic and some are undramatic. If a situation seems to you to have dramatic quality mark it plus (+); if it seems lacking in dramatic quality mark it minus (—).

"No definition of 'dramatic' is offered here, but the reader is reminded that a situation may be pathetic or terrible or spectacular or comic without being therefore dramatic. For example:

"(a) 'A man is slowly sinking in a quicksand at the foot of a cliff. He is alone and has no chance of escape.' This is pitiful and terrible, but not, as it stands, dramatic. It should be marked thus (—)

"(b) Add, however, that 'His brother stands on the cliff, rope in hand, ready to save him if he will disclose an important secret,' and this situation becomes dramatic. Mark is thus (+)

"(c) 'In a Roman circus the people are leaving their seats to go home, and the attendants are dragging out the bodies of the gladiators who have been killed.' This moment is spectacular but not dramatic. (—)

"(d) 'Two men are quietly drawing lots to see which shall commit suicide. It is a modern form of

duel.' Though not spectacular this is a dramatic moment. (+)

"Some of the following episodes have been used as play material, and some might be so used. Please judge them as they stand. If you think a situation could easily be made effective on the stage give it a plus sign, if not, a minus sign. (If you cannot decide put down a question-mark.)

"1. A priest is in the court-room where he sees an innocent man in danger of being condemned to death. In order to save him the priest is tempted to reveal a secret which he has heard in the confessional. ( )

"2. A doctor is watching a patient whose fever is at its critical point. At the bedside the sick man's family is kneeling and weeping. ( )

"3. The marriage-service is performed, without interruption, for a great military hero and a beautiful young girl. ( )

"4. A woman is pleading for her son's pardon. The governor, to whom she appeals, loves her, but tries to resist her entreaties from motives of duty. ( )

"5. A ten-year-old girl was carrying across the street a child who was almost as large as herself. A bystander said: 'Isn't he too heavy for you?' And she answered: 'Oh, he 's not heavy. He 's my brother.' ( )

"6. A miserly old man is told by a famous surgeon, in the presence of other people, that an operation which would cost a thousand dollars might save his son's life. ( )

"7. A woman walks into her husband's office and sees him kissing his pretty young stenographer. ( )

"8. A drunken sailor pursues a young girl to the top of a cliff, where she must either be overtaken or throw herself from the cliff into the sea. ( )

"9. A man is sitting alone in his office when the

telephone rings. The audience knows, though he does not, that a dictagraph has been concealed in the room. He carries on an incriminating conversation over the telephone. ( )

"10. A mill-owner buys from one of his own employees the patent rights to an invention, so that he may prevent its development and use by competing firms. ( )

"11. An embarrassed young man tries to ask a lady for her daughter's hand in marriage. The mother, mistaking his meaning, accepts him for herself. ( )

"12. An artist, who has worked for years in great poverty, receives in the morning mail two letters. One announces that he has won an important prize, and the other that his uncle has left him a fortune. ( )

"13. A young lawyer has been assigned, as his first important case, to the prosecution of a woman accused of crime. He sees her for the first time in court and recognizes his long-lost sweetheart. ( )

"14. A girl, in defiance of her wealthy father's wishes, has worked her way through college. On the morning of her graduation she reads in the newspaper the announcement of her father's bankruptcy. ( )

"15. A congressman votes in favor of an iniquitous bill, because by so doing he hopes to gain support for a good one. ( )

"16. When Handel was a young man he was invited to become the organist in a certain church. Upon his arrival he was told that whoever took this post was expected to marry the daughter of the preceding organist—a lady sixteen years older than Handel. ( )

"17. King Solomon judged between two women which was the mother of a living child. And the

king said, 'Bring me a sword.' And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, 'Divide the living child in two and give half to the one, half to the other.' ( )

"18. A public speaker, stepping upon the platform to make the most important speech of his life, falls in a faint before the whole audience. ( )

"19. A convict made his escape from prison and started for the mountains, when a large bloodhound was set upon his trail. The man made friends with the bloodhound and took him along to the mountains. The dog cost two hundred dollars. ( )

"20. An army officer is about to send one of two men on a specially dangerous mission. He is at liberty to send either one, and he is in love with the wife of one of them.

"21. An old couple sit by the fire talking of their absent son, whom they have sent to fight for his country. A messenger comes and tells them that the son was killed in a preventable railroad accident before he reached the trenches. ( )

"22. 'Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died.' ( )

"23. Milton, afflicted with blindness, dictates to his daughters the immortal lines of 'Paradise Lost.' ( )

"24. An aviator, flying at night, decorates his aëroplane with electric lights. After 'looping the loop' ten times in succession he returns safely to earth. ( )

"25. 'Then came Jesus forth wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

" 'When the chief priests therefore and officers

saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him; for I find no fault in him.' " ( )

I have given the test to a number of persons in addition to those tested by Miss Gordon. The returns tabulated for 104 individuals follow. By means of the table the reader can determine the degree to which his judgment is in harmony with that of the majority. If there is a conspicuous failure to agree, he should continue his self-analysis until he finds out what factor in his make-up accounts for his difference in reaction.

Number	*Dramatic*	*Doubtful*	*Undramatic*
13	102	1	1
4	101	1	2
20	96	0	8
1	91	1	12
17	85	2	17
8	84	3	17
9	83	1	20
25	76	3	25
7	76	5	23
11	67	1	36
6	67	2	35
16	44	6	54
22	34	3	67
19	23	1	80
14	21	2	80
12	21	3	80
18	17	3	84
21	17	3	84
15	16	2	86
2	16	3	85

Number	*Dramatic*	*Doubtful*	*Undramatic*
10	11	1	92
23	9	2	93
24	5	1	98
5	4	3	97
3	1	0	103

Miss Gordon continues:

The question whether the majority is right is a pertinent one but for lack of any other available standard I take this, and assume that the incidents which stand near the top of the above list are essentially more dramatic than those which stand near the bottom.

In order to define what is dramatic for this group of persons we must see what the quality is which is conspicuously present, say in No. 13, No. 4, No. 20, which gradually diminishes through No. 6 and No. 16, and which is conspicuously lacking in Nos. 3, 5, and 24.

J. B. D.

CHAPTER XIV

MISCELLANEOUS PERSONALS

We have all heard of the Irishman who found the Dictionary fine reading except that the chapters were so short! The same criticism may be applied to the Personals. But we give here a variety clipped from the London "Times," in the hope that the reader will amplify them.

Dip in your net wherever the stream looks promising and may you capture a story!

CORNY.—You cold-blooded monster.—Shamus.

BEATRICE.—The scientific pedagogue says "Finis."—Venetia.

VENETIA.—An unwarranted conclusion.—Beatrice.

GENTLEMAN (newly poor) OFFERS SHARE RUNNING his SPORTING CAR.

SAVOY, 17th.—Would tall unknown American, only two days in England, care to dance again?—Pink Lady.

LYDIA.—Blot me right out of your memory; good-by.—A.

CHUM.—Your revels will lead you into a position which I fancy you will find embarrassing.—Clifford.

HARRY.—We're the two guys from Dawson City.—M. and J.

UMPS.—You would if you could, I know.—Sol.

KIDDIE.—A tiny little 'possum, ma honey.—Adirondack.

PA—pa—pa—pa—pa—pagena.

FAIR Mustache and spats, Haymarket, 3:15, 11th.—My one regret is that I did not have my riding-whip with me.—Old Fogey.

FALCHION.—Evidently the tail wags the dog.—Kay.

G.T.—Does a gentleman wage war on the mud that bespatters him?—Key.

ROSA.—You are a cheat; honor is not sacred to you; and it is poor wit to make me the butt of your raillery.—L.

DRAGONFLY.—Treat them kindly, and they will yet feed out of your hand.—Peonl.

BUSTY.—But it shows the cheese is ripe.—B.

"TICKLERS" and suchlike forms of "fun" are all very well, but the victims should be carefully selected. The writer had an expensive pair of eyeglasses smashed owing to the hilarity of the revelers on New Year Eve.—Bat.

WILL any one give an ex-Major a JOB? Good all-round sportsman, keen golfer, ex-champion lawn tennis; good organizer and administrator; excellent credentials.

ROBERT.—Let us know when, that lictors may be in evidence to clear the way.—Pic.

Y.S.—Those that live in glass houses should not throw stones.—X. A.

BETTY.—When a maid is bold and gay, maiden may go hang-a.—Orpheus.

LOUISA.—Wonderful to relate, there were three spiders.—ROB.

THIS IS THE LAST TIME.—If you have any just cause, &c., speak, or hold peace.

XERXES.—You may laugh and sneer now, you braggart, but your coward knees will knock when face to face with your destiny.—Hilarion.

BLACK DRESS.—I enjoyed seeing you. I wonder when I shall again?—Eiffel Tower.

PUSS.—Phenomenally poor prospects; positive possession portends pitiless pitfall; possess patience.—Prudence.

U.A.—Treat me as you do "Nigger" and I shall be happy.—Sweet William.

WIDOW TWANKAY.—Reflect upon it and we will see.—Ye Rustic.

TOBY.—Manners maketh the man, not a fat cheque-book. —Hilda.

TWINKLE-TOES. — Tell me through Box D.579, The "Times."

TWINKLE-TOES.—Evidently a case of follow-the-leader.—Yseult.

KITTEN.—Every wish and thought.—Bigdog.

BIGDOG.—When and where did you see "Kitten"? Give some clue for identification.

M'AH.—Which was it, snakes or stars?—Dainty.

DAINTY.—If you had consulted your mirror on your return, you would have known.—M'ah.

FELICITE.—The bread and butter was cut very thin.—Percy.

DUX JUVENIS: Esne felix? Bellum gero contra inimicum suosque. Nolo storkum. Tecum semper.—Fortis.

NAUTCH GIRL. — Omar, LXXIV.—Popinjay.

CHERIE.—Did you call for —— wine, sir? Use the right bell, and the best that's left is thine; no one more delighted than self to see you better again. —Cheri.

SQUIRREL.—Frozen right out. —Mayfly.

TELEPATHY.—Nothing would induce me to return. It is a washout.—D.

BLUE MOON.—Suggest your remarks misunderstood; might be inclined to discuss if way was opened up.—Dutch Oven.

IGNIS FATUUS.—Nous verrons si vous êtes homme de parole. —Les Elegantes.

YE keye to ye mystery can be procured if ye apply to ye concierge à 38.

MANY applications to "ye concierge at 38" have failed to produce "ye keye." Want something better.—W. W.

WHEN distributing the fragments and the crumbs, don't forget the poor old Goldfish.

WEE PETER. — We know enough to make you squirm, but we ain't a-goin' to tell.—Starlight.

PILOT.—Diamond cut diamond; ho! ho! ho!—Wem.

ORANGE.—Agree to charges.—Apple.

VISITORS to LONDON are perhaps unaware that it is not customary to offer gratuities of sweetmeats to policemen for services rendered.—Bow Bells.

DON.—In future don't meddle with that which does not concern you.—Ella.

YOUNG AMERICAN, hobby violin, desires temporarily to join jazz-band for practice purposes.

THREE ANTI-JAZZERS, fed up with "holiday resorts," want HOME for August; suggestions welcomed.

LAVINIA. — Have heard you dubbed me "Knight of the Rueful Countenance"; until I find you it will express truly my feelings; won't you divulge?—Hector.

JEAN T.—Black 2, white 1, white 3, blue 2.—Amos.

BERT.—Idiot- why go tilting at windmills?—Irene.

HUGH.—Plenty of white elephants here.—P.

NOO.—"If!" always "if I do this" or "if I do that"; I refuse; don't pester me any more.—C.

VI.—You cannot conceal your thoughts any longer, for I know them. Do not attempt to deny, deceiver that you are, that you regard J. L. as a shuttlecock, to be sent hither and thither at your own capricious will.

VIII.—Feathers unruffled; calm contemplation; considering with placidity.—Big 'Un.

F.—Strangers henceforth.—J.

A Short-winded man wishes that 'bus-conductors were paid by results. He might then stand a chance of getting on the omnibus that he generally misses by a few seconds.—R. G. B.

ST.—I recognized you in spite of the "smoked windows"; but don't worry, you have address if you care to make use of it, and remember that things are not as they were.—"Brown."

THEO. G.—You rascal, I can see through your moves.—X2.

C.A.—Have endured ten thousand bitter hours; the old hopes and doubts rising before me; sometimes I fancy I see the light, and then suddenly all is oblivion. Obviously it cannot be endured much longer; have you any proposition——Yours, and yours only.

DAN.—Wait until it has worn off before consultation, else there is every possibility of an unqualified refusal which would be disastrous.—Bee.

I.Z.—Have lost the ring again. —Nadia.

BELLE.—Come to a decision quick, or cease. Word to "You" from "Me" eagerly awaited.—Z. Y.

BLUEBIRD.—Somehow or other I went wrong; you know my weakness; pray forgive me.—G. M.

TOPPER.—Sandwiches safely received.—Dolly.

Y.L. (Tukoo.)—All twirls and whirls.—Fottles.

P.—Worried, crushed, and shaken.—The Rat.

PANSY.—When in doubt, play trumps.—Hgy.

JUNE ROSES.—I wonder if you ever think of that day of days. I do, often, and I just sit and think and think.—Stanley.

STANLEY—Identity advert. of months ago just seen; does this help?—Mum.

GOLDEN ROSE.—Ever since then, the day of days, I have been floundering about in the sea of perplexity and want to change my dream to a moonlit lake, with a fairy barque wafted by the zephyrs.—Moth.

F.L.—The Moth, having singed her wings, is more inclined to reason.

SYBIL.—Fantastic dreams disturb my rest; my mind is tortured by visions of gaunt and grisly specters; you alone possess the philter that will charm away these wraiths.—Leonard.

LEONARD.—It is strange that you should be tormented so; nevertheless, even if I can charm away the ogres, I do not know that you deserve it.—Sybil.

LITTLE JOHN.—If you could but take a share of the blame on your shoulders, I know you would.—Queenie.

QUEENIE.—Evidently I am the sport of Fortune, to be tossed hither and thither like a shuttlecock.—The Troubadour.

M.J.L.—Bah! search if you will, you will go away empty-handed.—Pippin.

"FAYRE LADYE."—Deep in this styx of Friars Black, Where soupy fog confounds one's track, Amidst the city's harrowing wrack, Thy loveliness upholds me.—Lancelot.

MY KNIGHT.—Wouldst have me sit at home at my spinning-wheel, like a maiden all forlorn, or answer the call of the chase when the huntsman winds his horn?—Gwen.

GWEN.—Tell it the world!—Your Knight.

SPHINX.—Letter received, but not the expected enclosures, the lack of which means further delay and worry; can not you hurry them up?—Glowworm.

MANY glow-worms are necessary to cast sufficient light on the problem you state.

M.—My thoughts are always of you, dear heart.

T. dear; are these "M" messages yours? I made so sure they were until three others I sent on Dec. 2nd, 10th, and 18th—after my reply to the last "M" one—met with no response. Look them up, and if the "Les temps passés" message was from you there is a letter waiting at the address you gave the "Times." End my suspense quickly, dear.—M.

TODDLES.—I am like the poor soul who sat sighing by a green willow-tree.—Judy.

TODDLES.—We miss you so much; won't you cheer us with a line?—"Ben Alywin."

PRINCESS.—Where are you? Fear not, the matter is settled.—Laughing Cavalier.

SKEETER.—The sands of time have nearly run out, and you must make your intentions known. Any further secrecy and I am finished.—Omaha.

PETE.—I feel you are unhappy. Can I do anything? Am strong.—Soul Baby.

CAMEO.—Why pass me by? Do you cut too big a figure in your new surroundings?—Pep.

CAMEO.—Sorry to hear of distress: bear up for a time; the sun will soon shine again.—R. R.

GYPSY LOVE.—Coldstreamer's father has authority to insist that all correspondence of this nature should cease.

WAT TYLER.—See and believe —Ella.

ELLA.—Many thanks. Will do so on appearance of a similar opportunity.—Wat Tyler.

WAT TYLER.—Have the rats deserted the foredoomed ship?—Ella.

CHAPTER XV

PERSONALS IN CONTINUITIES

The Story of Quatre-Vingt-Quatre

We are not confined to a single item for a clue, for sometimes a correspondence runs for months. The Gondolier and 84 must have spent several hundred dollars on "Times" advertisements in their efforts to clear up mutual misunderstandings although they were also in communication by letter, by telegram, and by meetings on the green. Here is a bunch of their messages clipped by chance and not arranged in chronological order:

GONDOLIER.—Now that the New Year is here, will you not give me the opportunity to clear the air?—84.

84.—Neither by entreaty nor by bribe.—The Gondolier.

C.O.—Contemptible poltroon! Yes, chuckle like the dying miser who laughs his last on hearing his wealthy neighbor has become a bankrupt.—84.

GONDOLIER.—You seek to disarm me, to harass and perplex me, with smooth and cunning words. I was foolish once, but now—you 'll find it a dangerous enterprise. — Quatre-Vingt-Quatre.

84.—Important news at last; so important that there must be no misunderstanding as to the means of conveyance; what say you?—Gondolier.

84.—In the coming New Year, pray let your thoughts be more charitable to the Gondolier.

C.O.—"Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried, grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel." Would I had learnt my lesson before.—Quatre-Vingt-Quatre.

IF it means what I think, I agree, and shall certainly not be offended.—84.

84.—When will you comply?—The Gondolier.

GONDOLIER.—Have reached the limit. Choose between now or never. Will no longer be insulted.—84.

84.—Your long silence causes me furiously to think, and the more I think, the greater embarrassed am I, trying to solve the problem as to wherein I have offended; let me hear speedily, that my mind may be set at rest.—The Gondolier.

THE GONDOLIER.—You have not offended me. Cease thinking and act. Inquire G. P.O. for returned letter 271, April 12, 1920; also wire Nov. 2, 1920—message "Addressee said to have left that address two years ago." Then you will understand.—84.

84.—More mystified than ever; evidently you imagine that I expect others to act for me whilst I "recline at my ease." "Left two years ago." Have always had a Wanderlust, so that indicates nothing.—Gondolier.

GONDOLIER.—Yours not to reason why; *en avant* and do not hesitate.—84.

GONDOLIER.—So glad. Now will you say how receive it? Proves my theories correct.—84.

84.—Show a little pity.—Gondolier.

GONDOLIER.—Ho! Ho! Ho! so now you know; choose your weapons. Shall it be coffee and pistols for two?—M. B.

GONDOLIER.—Cannot return. Am kept away by letter, disconcerting, July 16, supposed written you.—84.

84.—July 16 not written by me; am confused.—Gondolier.

GONDOLIER.—Have a very important communication which will work wonders. How receive it?—84.

84.—It does not become us to quarrel like two yokels at a fair. I promise you we shall go deeper into the matter another time.—The Gondolier.

84.—Worse than ever; I know not whether I stand on my feet or my head.—Gondolier.

GONDOLIER.—Thursday come to green, where you saw me last week, same time. Full explanation.—84.

84.—Have faith in me when I say that rumor is a lying jade, and those that are responsible will answer dearly in the end.—Gondolier.

C.O.—Thank you very much. I am delighted to see the change of attitude.—84.

G.—First prove yourself worthy to march beneath my standard.—The Gondolier.

C.O.—The hare, no doubt, feels very brave when he tugs at the dead lion's beard.—The Gondolier.

84.—A direct question will receive a direct answer. Insinuations will be ignored.

84.—Here's to your good health. —C. O.

84.—I want to find out; but I am loth to offend.—C. O.

GONDOLIER.—No possible doubt whatever.—Tessa.

84.—Would that you would drink to me only with thine eyes, and I pledge you with mine.—C. O.

The Wanderer and the Acorn

If you find two lines too little to fire your imagination perhaps you will like the Wanderer-Acorn-Squirrel complex. Arrange the items as you please and interpret them as you must:

ACORN.—Something tells me you are calling; dear one, if we could but meet but alas, this cannot be: nevertheless, I am still faithful and true.—Wanderer.

ACORN.—My Egypt, 'tis indeed you calling me, through an unknown agency at which many scoff; but we know my beloved Isis the joy and truth of such, and rejoice in our hearts, that though cruelly parted. we may continue with each other; The Wanderer lives for you alone.

THOU wilt say the time is here. I placed an acorn. A Wanderer may wish to water with one winter rain.—Squirrel.

ACORN.—You can not hinder it; neither can you clutch the wheel of Destiny and say to Time—"Turn Back"; so yield to the inevitable and inexorable.—Wanderer.

WANDERER.—If not I, then who can hope to save?—Acorn.

ACORN.—Yours received; what has been done that such a judgment should be visited upon us? Oh! beloved, if you did but know the pain and remorse that I have endured, you would indeed bear with me.—Wanderer.

ACORN.—Forget me not, beloved, for in the forthcoming ordeal I shall need your inspiring spirit to watch o'er me and succor me should adversity temporarily prevail. When girding on my armor I shall be animated with the thought that you are my strength.—The Wanderer.

SQUIRREL.—One of these days you will be glad to feed out of my hand.—B.

BETSY. — Requires freshening up with another coat of paint.—Wanderer.

ACORN.—Have I offended—else why this awful silence? Certain it is that my hopes are not yet dashed to the ground, and I shall foil them yet; but your help is necessary to me, and I ask for your aid.—Wanderer.

P.—What appeals?—Acorn.

ACORN.—The storm is driving all before it, and I am in fear lest my poor wee one should be torn up and destroyed. I see it as in a vision.—Wanderer.

FEARED you were a cad. Now quite sure of it. Finis.—Acorn.

ACORN.—When all was pleasant and blooming you took part in my play; now that storm-clouds darken the sky and the icy winds of dread fate threaten me, I am left to bear the burden along.—The Wanderer.

ACORN.—Follow a shadow, it still flies you; seem to fly it, it will pursue.—W.

WANDERER.—Where are you hiding yourself? I am longing to hear from you; the sooner I do, the more quickly shall I be able to facilitate the dispatch of the Ms.—Acorn.

ACORN.—Do you then believe that a still tongue maketh a wise head? Or is it a fit of the sulks?

WANDERER.—How can you be so heartless to scorn me? Your cruel words demand a swift retribution.

ACORN.—Dear heart, you know you are my all-in-all; why have you not responded? I would that we could overcome the obstacles that are causing so much despair. Despair, did I say? Rather sorrow, at our separation. —Wanderer.

CLARISSIMA MIA.—You are distracted by the ignoble actions of those whom you have so correctly described. We shall yet scourge them with scorpions and weather the storm-clouds that do now threaten us. My tenderest thoughts are for thee and thy happiness.—The Wanderer.

ACORN, dear. What obstacles? My life an open book. Any one can read who cares.

WRITE to me.—Acorn.

ACORN.—The fleeting days, they pass on, and still nothing is said or done and no signs of anything either.—Wanderer.

ACORN.—I am angry; but not envious; my dull life has been too full of such moments.—Wanderer.

WHEN a Jay seeks the Acorn, a cat may look at a king.—A. W.

Clarry and the Count

The tripartite correspondence between Clarry and the Count and Poppa presents an interesting problem. Arrange the items in suitable sequence and analyze the situation:

CLARRY.—Poppa knows, thanks to the precious policy of doing things by halves.—The Count.

CLARRY.—Heard from Poppa; unfavorable; seems as though we shall have to paddle our own canoe.—The Count.

POPPA hopes that both The Count and Clarry have not burnt their fingers too much.

CLARRY.—Poppa now realizes that experience is the most effective schoolmaster; but were n't the fees heavy?—The Count.

THE COUNT and CLARRY.—Zounds! I will crop your ears close to the pate, as the hangman shears the rogues' heads at the pillory.—Poppa.

THE COUNT.—Let him; we shall laugh yet, for the waves now are not so boisterous.—Clarry.

CLARRY AND THE COUNT.—It has always been my proud boast that nothing should thwart my will, and now you young knaves have thrown down the gauntlet and I can not but accept.—Poppa.

CLARRY.—Poppa hoists the signal of distress; a wise old owl.—The Count.

CLARRY.—Poppa is now left with a double balk.—The Count.

CLARRY.—Poppa has made the amende honorable, so the incident is now closed.—The Count.

SAN.—My son, ding, dong, ding, dong; may the bell ring out right merrily.—The Boys.

POPPA.—Showing the white feather.—The Boys.

POPPA.—Be a sport.—The Boys.

BOYS.—Yes! and knows how to play it.—Poppa.

CLARRY AND THE COUNT.—Bitten off more than you can chew?—Poppa.

COUNT.—What a nerve, what sangfroid!—Clarry.

POPPA.—Cheerio! We should n't like you to think we had forgotten you.—Clarry and The Count.

CLARRY.—Poppa cannot crow now.—The Count.

POPPA.—A cold douche is an effective remedy.—Clarry.

CLARRY AND THE COUNT.—I am highly appreciative, and your ingenuity inclines me to be indulgent.—Poppa.

CLARRY.—Poppa is n't having any.—The Count.

The Muleteer's Quest

The Personals given below, though only part of a series and not in the order of publication, are enough to supply material for an adventure novel in the style of Richard Harding Davis or a movie scenario for Douglas Fairbanks. Possibly it has been so used and these advertisements were contrived to whet public curiosity in advance. If so, all the better for our purpose. The varied characters, the picturesque setting, the mysterious messages, should serve to stimulate the most sluggish imagination.

ESCURIAL.—Does the muleteer approve of the proposed proceedings?—Grandee of Aragon.

MANANA.—Muleteer.

MULETEER.—Your servant awaits and is most attentive to command.—Hermes.

MULETEER.—I am not a dolt to be alarmed; what you say will happen; I do not care a rap.—Mistletoe.

GUERRA AL CUCHILLO.—The Muleteer.

NADELLE.—At present the cloud is no larger than a man's hand; I fear that it will grow and then burst upon us with all the fury of a typhoon. —Escurial.

MULETEER.—Shake off slumber and beware. Awake! Awake!

FRIENDS.—The call-bell has rung and everything is set for the great act now impending. —Muleteer.

MULETEER.—What prudent man would beard the lion in his den?—Mm.

CHERE AMIE.—The popping of the corks made excellent music.—The Muleteer.

WHITE MAN.—If Muleteer, innocent, proved, advt. time ago, "if you do not answer will divulge all I know." Same letter supposed to be in another's possession. Therefore letter taken to testify to false witness.—White Woman.

MULETEER.—Yes! will do as suggested and our fortunes are made.—Napoli.

C.T.—It is not for the pawn to argue with the fingers that move him from square to square.—The Muleteer.

MULETEER.—If I can.—Ancient Mariner.

PHILIPPE.—It shall never be said that I deserted my friends in time of peril; rely on me and all will be righted.—The Muleteer.

ALL WERE CALLED, but few responded to the call of the Muleteer; those that slight him may have cause to repent their folly later.

BLUE DEVIL.—You would like to settle up at once and for all? You know not what you do when rousing the ire of The Muleteer.

CITY OFFICE.—Would you AGREE to PUBLISH "THE MULETEER'S QUEST" when written?

CITY OFFICE.—Your inhuman insinuations are not worthy of an answer.—The Innocent Victim.

5562168

[redacted]

021